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JUNE '93

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MICHAEL BAKER

NEW YORK CITY
STREET DRUMMERS

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FEATURES

CHARLIE BENANTE

A five-piece drumkit? Backing off on the double bass? Has thrash monster Charlie Benante given up the ghost? Well, not totally. But with Anthrax's new record, Charlie has learned that the power of restraint can be the road to sonic salvation. Find out where Benante's head, hands, and feet are at these days in this special interview.

• by Teri Saccone

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MICHAEL BAKER

Exactly what *is* a "jazzer" like Michael Baker doing backing up R&B star Whitney Houston? To hear Michael tell it, laying down the unstoppable groove is actually where he's *supposed* to be. Here MD traces the winding path that's led to Baker's current musical digs.

• by Robyn Flans

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NYC STREET DRUMMERS

In a city like New York, only the strong—and the clever—survive. Check out how some unusual drummers have bypassed the crowded club scene and made a stage for themselves—on the colorful and demanding streets of NYC. This ain't no disco.

• by Ken Micallef

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INSIDE ZILDJIAN DRUMSTICKS

Do drummers really need another stick-maker? Well, judging from the success of Zildjian's wood-working wing, it seems they do. Find out how the legendary cymbal-makers made a niche for themselves in stick bins across the country.

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BY RICK MATTINGLY

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Collectors' Corner



Buying, selling, and collecting vintage drums was at one time just a simple pastime among a small group of drummers who found enjoyment—and occasionally a small profit—in the hobby. Today, there's a great interest in all types of collectable gear among an ever-expanding drumming audience. A quick glance at *MD's Drum Market* classifieds is ample evidence of just how popular vintage gear has become.

Some of the names will surely ring a bell for those of us over forty, though age does not appear to be a factor here, since drummers of all ages are becoming more and more fascinated with these outstanding instruments of the past. Some of the instruments in particular demand are original Ludwig *Black Beauties*, Slingerland *Radio Kings*, Gretsch *Broadcasters*, *Leedy Elites*, Gladstone snare drums, K Zildjian cymbals, and legendary equipment from companies like WFL, Camco, and Rogers.

Of course, as in other highly specialized fields, a small group of experts has appeared on the scene. And many of these very knowledgeable individuals can supply expertise on practically every detail of a particular drum's design, operation, production dates, importance as a collectable, and present value in good old American dollars. Some of those who immediately come to mind are Bill Ludwig, Jr., the proud owner of an extraordinary collection (some of it dating back to the Civil War), and of course Ned Ingberman, owner of the Vintage Drum Center in Libertyville, Iowa, who specializes in vintage gear exclusively. A few others with astonishing expertise are John Aldridge in Denver, Andy Florio in LA, *MD* Advisory Board member Charlie Donnelly from Connecticut, and our good friend Harry Cangany of the Drum Center of Indianapolis.

As a result of all this interest in vintage equipment, I'm happy to say that we're debuting a brand new department in this issue called *Collectors' Corner*. Authored by the aforementioned Harry Cangany—truly one of the nation's leading experts—*Collectors' Corner* will be appearing in *MD* at least four times yearly. And in each installment, Harry will supply us with detailed information on a wide variety of valuable vintage equipment—much of it from his own incredible private collection.

We're hopeful you'll find *Collectors' Corner* interesting and informative. Perhaps it may even open some of you up to a whole new area of interest. Regardless, if you're a serious drummer at any age, we think you'll find *Collectors' Corner* highly entertaining and quite fascinating as well. You'll find the first article on page 76 of this issue. Enjoy.

RS

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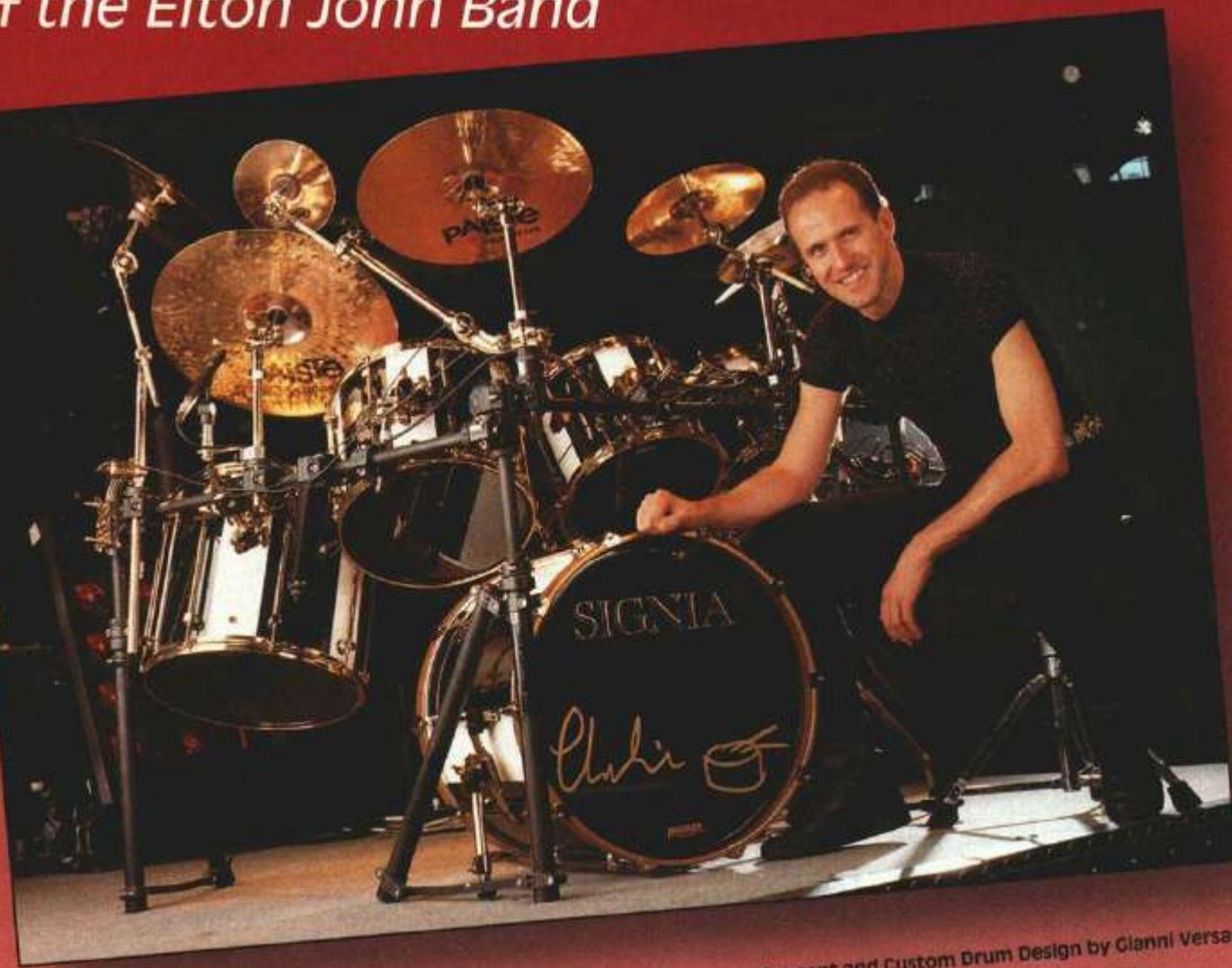
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Profile: Charlie Morgan of the Elton John Band



PERSONAL DATA:

Charlie Morgan

BORN: Hammersmith, London, England

CURRENT PROJECTS:

- Currently on a sold-out World Tour with the Elton John Band.
- Just completed new album with EMI artist Tasmin Archer
- Video for Kate Bush's "Rocket Man" cover on the "Two Rooms" Album.

Concept and Custom Drum Design by Gianni Versace

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SEXISM IN MD?

I am writing to explain why I refuse to renew my subscription. I am a woman drummer and I find *Modern Drummer* extremely sexist and male dominated. The advertisements are especially offensive with their macho, heavy metal sweat hogs beating and standing on drums like the fools they are. And how about that music school that advertises for "a few good men." Give me a break!

As a woman, I find no role models within the pages of your magazine, nor can I identify with the articles. Drummers mentioned in stories not dealing with specific people are always "him" or "he," and almost every face in the magazine is male. It is magazines like this that perpetuate the myth that only men can and do play drums.

In a world that is becoming increasingly aware of sexism in society, I would have to say that *Modern Drummer* is stuck in the stone age. As the only major publication that deals with drums and drumming, you people at *Modern Drummer* have a responsibility to represent the drumming community *in full!* There are terrific women drummers out there. I should know, I am one of them. (If we women were fairly represented in the drumming community, we wouldn't have to "beat our own drums.") I also had an outstanding woman teacher during my early high school years. I strongly suggest you open your eyes and seek out women to fill the huge gap in your magazine. Maybe then more people would consider buying your publication.

Jennifer Schwartz
Northampton MA

Editor's note: Ms. Schwartz included MD's subscription ad featuring Bobby Rock, Tama's ad featuring Jonathan Mover and others on motorcycles, and Pro-Mark's "Hip Pocket" ad as examples of sexist advertising.

Editor's response: Ms. Schwartz, we regret your decision not to renew your subscrip-

tion. You have explained your reasons for this decision quite explicitly. We'd like to respond to a few of the points you've raised, in an effort to explain *Modern Drummer's* position on the issue of sexism in our magazine.

To begin with, like it or not, 97.3% of the drumming population is male. In fact, the vast majority of the music industry as a whole is male. At MD, we do not create these statistics, nor do we have any control over the circumstances that do create them. We publish stories about the leading contemporary figures in drumming, up-and-coming new artists, and drummers of historical note. As you might imagine from the figure above, that automatically means that we publish most of our stories on male drummers. When a female drummer figures in any of the categories mentioned above, we are more than pleased to include her in our pages.

Many other specialized magazines have a predominantly male readership based on a predominantly male participation base—sports, cars, hunting, etc.—and they reflect this fact in their editorial and advertising focus. In the same way, many "women's" magazines could easily be accused of sexist bias toward women, since they overwhelmingly feature profiles on women, columns dedicated to women's interests, and advertisements both depicting and directed at women. The reality is that any publication must address the interests of the majority of its readership in order to be successful and stay in business. This applies to the editorial content (over which a magazine has complete control) and the advertising (over which a magazine has very limited control).

Advertising, to be effective, must appeal to the strongest possible market base. At the moment, throughout the music industry, the strongest market base is young, rock-oriented, male musicians. Again, like it or not, this is a fact that advertisers must recognize in order to maximize the impact of their ads. But this is still far from the entire focus of the advertising in *Modern Drummer*. While you had no trouble find-

ing examples to support your contention that MD runs sexist ads featuring "heavy metal sweat hog" drummers, you can just as easily find ads featuring contemporary jazz artists ("Smitty" Smith for Vater), historic drumming figures (Zildjian's photo gallery ad), drumming giants (Tony Williams for Shure), Latino stars (Luis Conte for LP), and country drummers (Pro-Mark's Wanted Poster ad). These ads all ran in our March '93 issue. Though all of them admittedly featured male drummers, none of those drummers are rock "sweat hogs," and not one makes a habit of standing on his drums.

We regret that you find no role models in *Modern Drummer*. However, to say so indicates a reverse sexism on your part. You certainly needn't identify with the heavy metal drummers we occasionally do present. However, to ignore the contributions of the hundreds of other drummers from all styles of music that we cover month after month simply because they are male seems self-defeating. And in point of fact, *Modern Drummer* has covered a number of women drummers over the years—often in the face of great controversy. Please see the list below. The fact that the list is not extensive is in no way due to any reluctance on our part to include women drummers in our magazine. It is a reflection of the percentage of women involved in drumming.

In response to your admonition to us to "seek out women to fill the huge gap" in our magazine, please understand that we cannot do a story on a woman drummer simply because she is a woman drummer—any more than we can do a story on a male drummer because he happens to play drums. Any drummer must have achieved a certain level of "newsworthiness" before our readers will be interested in reading about her or him. Admittedly, it's more difficult for a woman to achieve this status in the drumming profession than for a man. But while this fact is regrettable, it's still a fact, and we must plan our coverage accordingly.

We have stated—repeatedly—that MD

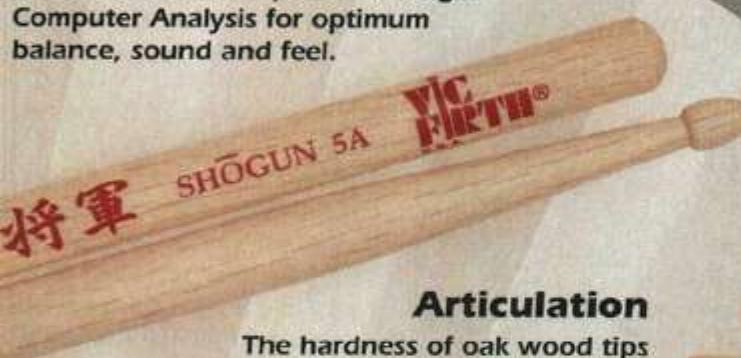
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Vic Firth presents

SHŌGUN 将軍

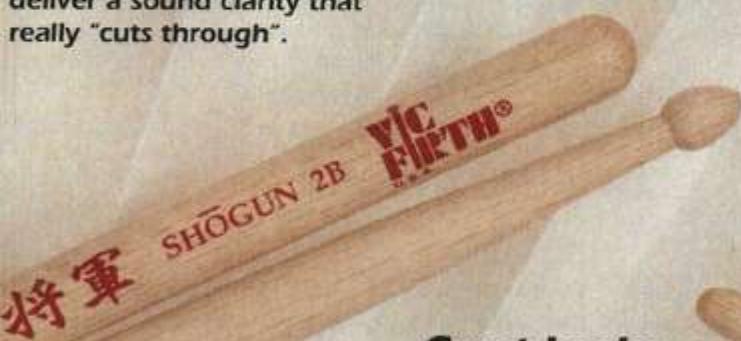
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Our new SHŌGUN drum sticks are a true East-meets-West success story. Made from the highest quality Japanese white oak, these sticks are produced in the U.S.A. to the level of perfection you have come to expect from Vic Firth. And like all of our sticks, SHŌGUN sticks are paired through Computer Analysis for optimum balance, sound and feel.



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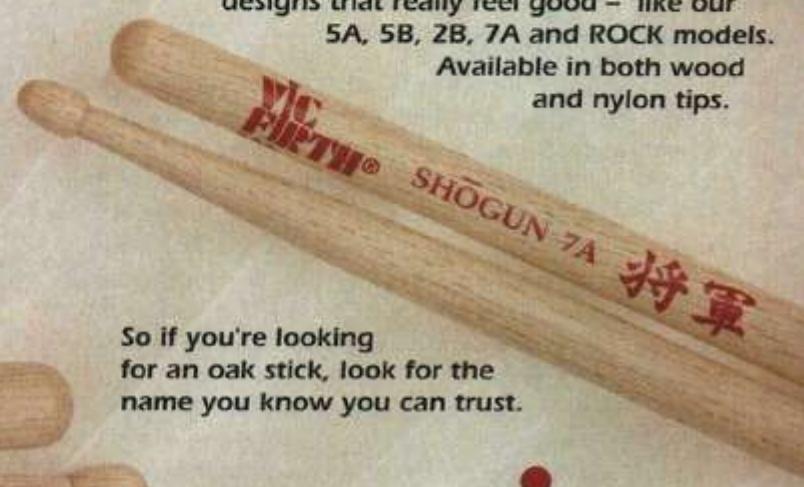
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Jerry Augustyniak

August 20, 1992 is a date 10,000 Maniacs' Jerry Augustyniak won't soon forget. As he puts it, "That was the day I saw my career flash before my eyes."

The drummer was riding his bike down a busy Pittsburgh street, and, the way he remembers it, "I took my eyes off the road for just a second, and I think I hit a car mirror. The next thing I knew I was flying through the air."

For Augustyniak, the accident resulted in a broken collarbone and a few weeks' worth of recuperation—just as 10,000 Maniacs was getting ready to do a short tour to promote their latest album, *Our Time In Eden*. "Actually, I was pretty lucky," Jerry says. "I could have been hurt much more seriously than I was. But that didn't cut down on how bad I felt that I couldn't go out on tour with the band."

Augustyniak lay low in Pittsburgh while E Street Band drum-

mer Max Weinberg filled in for him. "Max was a good replacement," says Augustyniak. "He's a great rock drummer; he doesn't do anything fancy. He's more of

an 'in-the-pocket' kind of player."

Augustyniak is now back with 10,000 Maniacs. Although he says he still experiences pain when he performs simple tasks like opening a door, the act of drumming causes him no discomfort.

"It's strange, but it's true," he says. "I took it easy when I first returned, and I had to wear this figure-eight brace, which kept my shoulder in place. But now I'm pretty much back to normal."

If you notice any differences in Augustyniak's drum style, though, it's not because of his injury. It's due to the time he spent working with blues bands and listening to Led Zeppelin during the hiatus 10,000 Maniacs enjoyed before recording *Our Time In Eden*.

"I think I learned to swing," the drummer explains. "You *have* to have that sense of swing when you play the blues."

• Robert Santelli

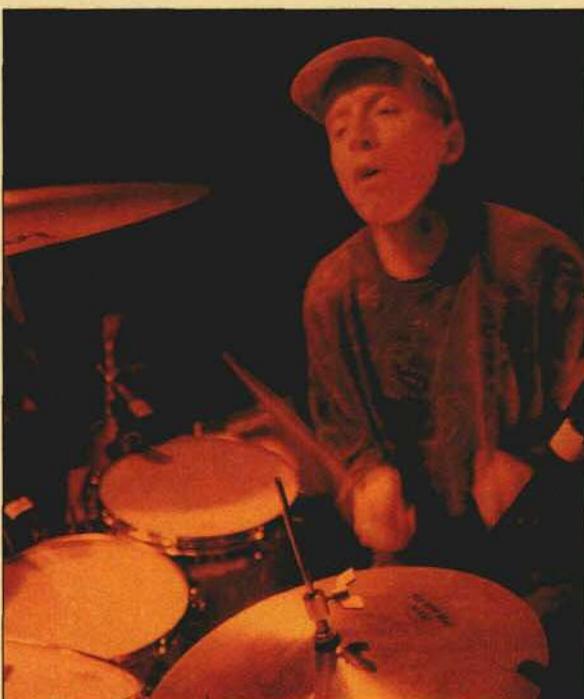


Photo by Betty Cheung

Glen Graham

Steering a dynamic rhythm section, drummer Glen Graham is helping to get the music of Blind Melon out to the masses—especially to their expanding college/alternative following.

Graham, who happens to be in a band whose folk/electric/acoustic leanings evoke a '60s to early '70s vibe, does in fact appreciate the drumming of that period. "My background is rock, but it's jazzier rock," he says. "I'm definitely a big Jim Gordon fan, especially of the Derek and the Dominos era. The broken-up 16th-note ride patterns—that's sort of my approach, if I had to put it in a nutshell."

When Graham was asked to join the band in LA in 1990, he was living in Mississippi, making a living as a drummer. "I had known two other guys in the band back home in Mississippi, and when they called me and told me they were shopping a deal, that was good enough for me. I had *absolutely* no doubt they were gonna get signed. Though I didn't realize then that everybody in LA was shopping for a deal, too. I'd never even entertained the

notion of going to Los Angeles. I liked playing original music in a band, as I had been doing. My greatest ambition was to get an independent label interested and to tour throughout the Southeast. That was it.

"I was really bothered by a lot of crap music that had been coming out throughout the '80s, especially in the area of drums," Graham continues. "I couldn't help but think that the people involved in some of it were forced to tailor their playing to the industry. A lot of people played on the beat, period, with huge cannon sounds, and that turned me off. Anyway, I felt I had nothing to lose, so I went out there and it turned out to be a lucky break for me."

Blind Melon is an open-ended invitation to collaborate, which pleases Glen to no end. "It's the coolest thing I've ever been involved with as far as the writing goes," he says. "It's very laid-back, and we do anything that we come up with."

• Teri Saccone

Eric Valentine

Eric Valentine, who produced and played on T-Ride's debut offering, says a lot of experimentation went into the project. "My personal taste consists of a lot of old-style techniques, all the way back to the late '60s-early '70s, where they didn't have a lot of outboard gear. They would take advantage of the room the drums were in to get a really big, aggressive sound, like John Bonham. I've taken that and used it in conjunction with a lot of cool modern techniques to get a hybrid."

"The studio we put together to do the record was a 5,000-square-foot warehouse that we used as a huge echo chamber," says Eric while on tour with T-Ride, opening for Joe Satriani. "When you have an entire drumset playing at one time, it can turn into a big wash, so I played the kick and snare first to take full advantage of this huge room. Then I overdubbed the other things and added as much of the room as necessary to make it fit in, but not be a mess."

"On 'You And Your Friend,' I ended up using a drum loop," Valentine continues. "It was a repetitive part, and the drums weren't really the feature on that song anyway. But my favorite song drum-wise is 'I Hunger.' That's a good example of doing the

kick drum and snare drum first and then overdubbing everything else. It's the most challenging and fun song for me to play live."

Eric explains that on the song "Bone Down," the band built a wooden riser to get the effect of people stomping their feet in a coliseum. "A friend of ours was having a party, so we went over there and said, 'How many of you want to be on a record?' We brought them all down to the studio, and although it was very difficult, we got everybody to stomp reasonably on the beat to get that big stomping sound at the beginning of the song.

"On the song 'Backdoor Romeo,'" Valentine says, "the band knew they wanted brushes, except I never learned how to play with brushes. When that song was first put together, we were using an office building that we shared with an architectural company, and they had drafting brushes that they use to sweep away erasures. That was the only thing that was available, so I actually ended up using the drafting brushes to play the part on the record—and to this day, I play the song live with drafting brushes." Keep an eye out for Eric and his brushes on tour in your area.

• Robyn Flans

Gregory Hutchinson

At age 22, Gregory Hutchinson has a resume some drummers would die for. Prior to his current gig with trumpet sensation Roy Hargrove, Hutchinson put in two years with Betty Carter. Carter then led to gigs with Buster Williams, Freddie Hubbard, Wynton Marsalis, and Lou Donaldson, as well as recording dates like Hargrove's *The Vibe*, saxophonist Joshua Redman's upcoming debut on Warner Bros., and Joe Henderson's chartbuster, *Lush Life*.

Though Hutchinson's playing recalls Art Blakey, Max Roach, Philly Joe Jones ("He was one of the slickest cats") and Tony Williams, he plays with his own voice—not an easy accomplishment at such a young age.

Raised in New York, Gregory started playing drums at age five, inspired by his

percussionist father Melvin. In fact, he played his first gig with one of his dad's groups when he was ten. Early on, R&B and funk became his first musical ticket, and they are styles he says he still enjoys playing. Actually, Gregory expresses a wariness of being pigeonholed as a jazz drummer. "If you can play any kind of music on a high level, you should," he says. Nevertheless, with lessons from Kenny Washington and Marvin "Smitty" Smith under his belt, it's clear that he can swing.

Obviously, Hutchinson was ready to meet professional challenges pretty early on. He was still in high school when Betty Carter called him, though that's information Gregory admits trying to keep *out* of the conversation at the time. But the veteran songstress uncovered the

truth—and told him she'd call back when he finished school. Sure enough, after graduation, a brief gig with Red Rodney, and a year and a half at Manhattan School of Music, he landed the gig with Carter,

With Hargrove, Gregory enjoys a real drummer's gig. "This band plays so many different types of music," he says. "Whatever the tune or soloist dictates, I'll go that way."

For the future, Gregory foresees returning to Manhattan to finish up his education, including more drum studies with Justin DiCioccio. After that, he says that leading his own group is high on his wish list, though "I'm content right now to play as many different types of gigs as I can."

• Charles Levin

News...

Stu Nevitt is working on a new album with Shadowfax, while their album *Esperanto* is currently in the stores.

Tom Roady has been doing percussion for Hank, Jr., Steve Wariner, Billy Walker, Jr., and Suzy Bogguss, and on **Larrie Londin's** soon-to-be-released recording.

Ron Pangborn working on a new Matthew Sweet album.

Eric Singer can be heard on *Kiss Alive HI*, due out in May.

Kelly Keagy, Carmine Appice, and Michael Cartellone can be heard on Brad Gillis's solo debut, *GilrockRanch*.

Tim Grogan in the studio with Chris Hillman & the Desert Rose band for their new release due out in May.

David Lauser, previously with Sammy Hagar (1980-'87), is in Alliance, a new band featuring former members of Night Ranger.

Brush-master **Clayton**

Cameron recently relocated to New York City, and has been playing gigs with the Mingus Tribute Band and subbing in the Broadway show *Jelly's Last Jam*.

Kofi Baker (Ginger's son) and his band Lost City recently signed with Scotti Bros. Records.



If "They Just Don't Make

Explain These.

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SERIES

We've all heard the stories. "He's got this old kit he keeps in a closet. He only uses it for special sessions and it sounds amazing". People love the sound of vintage drums because their thin shells seem to resonate forever. But, they're fragile, which probably explains why most are kept in a closet. In a perfect world you could have both.

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Sequoia Red

Emerald Mist

White Mist

Black Mist

Sheer Blue



Steve Smith

A After purchasing both of your videos, I've become a big fan of yours. I also really enjoy Vital Information. I have *Fiafiaga*, *Global Beat*, and *Vitalive*. What other releases does the group have, and where can I obtain them on CD? And is there any chance of the group playing Cleveland soon?

I have another question, pertaining to volume—specifically, playing with *enough* volume. I'm 5'-11", and have always been very thin. A friend of mine who plays for a well-known local artist is always saying that I don't hit hard enough. I already feel that I'm breaking too many sticks and denting heads. My instructor tells me not to get paranoid, because I can always use

bigger sticks and let the mic's do the work. I was using *Pinstripe* heads on my toms (with *Ambassadors* or *Diplomats* on the bottoms), but I've switched to *Legacy Ambassadors*, which seem to last longer and don't have a thick, "plastic" sound. At the moment, all of my playing is home practicing, while I'm looking for a new band. I would appreciate any of your insight.

Chris O'Hare
Akron OH

A Hi Chris! The first and second Vital Info records are *Vital Information* and *Orion*—both on Columbia and both out of print. (They never

were on CD.) The new album, *Easier Done Than Said* (on Manhattan) is out now on CD and tape.

As far as volume goes, I see it like this: Drums and cymbals are naturally loud when played with even a light or medium touch. If you're hitting hard, I'm sure you're getting enough volume. I think about *sound*. If you can get a full sound and a proper balance between your limbs, then—like your teacher says—let the mic's do the rest.

Vital Info played Cleveland in '92, and I'm sure we'll be through again in '93. Hope to see you there!

Butch Miles

A You and Sonny Payne have been huge influences on me, and the columns you wrote for *MD* were extremely helpful. I have three questions. First, what big band or small group are you currently with? Second, what is your current setup and how has it varied since the "Basie days"? Third, do you have any plans to put out a video or instruction book?

Manuel Prince
E. Hartford CT

A I thank you for the kind words! I'd like to start by saying that Sonny Payne was also a *major* influence on me in terms of big band playing—along with being a good friend.

To answer your questions in order, I've been working with Walt Levinsky and the Great



American Swing Orchestra in New York, and with Peter Appleyard's fine big band in Toronto in tributes to Benny Goodman. As for other groups, I'm basically free-lancing with a number of fine people, including traveling to Europe quite a lot.

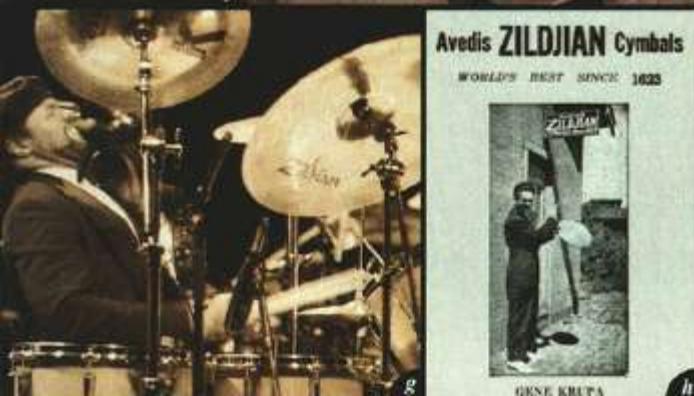
My setup has varied a little since the great Basie days. I use a 14x20 bass drum, a 9x13 rack tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 5 1/2 x 14 snare drum—all by Ludwig. My Zildjian cymbals include a 20" K heavy ride, a 20" A medium-thin swish, an 18" A medium crash (from the Basie days), and 13" A. *New Beat* hi-hats. I expect to change some of my cymbals in the near future.

I have no plans to put out a video or book soon—but I have been thinking about a small book that I would like to write sometime before the year 2000. Good luck to you, and always swing!

WHEN AVEDIS ZILDJIAN
HAMMERED HIS
FIRST CYMBAL IN 1623,
THE WORD
SPREAD FOR MILES.



- a. Avedis II, Kerop, Aram, Avedis III, and Armand Zildjian.
- b. Constantinople (now Istanbul).
- c. In 1929, Aram and Avedis III set up shop in Quincy, Massachusetts.
- d. Zildjians have dominated international trade fairs since the 1800's.
- e. Today, our drumsticks are as sought-after as our cymbals.
- f. Jo Jones, legendary Jazz pioneer.
- g. We work closely with today's top drummers, like Dennis Chambers.
- h. Throughout history, the great drummers have always played Zildjians.



The year was 1623. The place was Constantinople. An alchemist by the name of Avedis discovered a secret process for treating alloys, and used it to produce cymbals of such extraordinary clarity and power, that he was giv-

THE SOUND TRAVELED F

en the name

"Zildjian"—Turkish for "cymbalsmith." Of course,

Avedis had no way of knowing that 370 years later, the



sound of his first cym-

bal would still carry. For

while refinements

have been made to that

still-secret process over the years, today

it remains essentially the same one Avedis hit upon

almost 400 years ago, handed down from one

generation of the Zildjian family, to the next. Through

the centuries, Zildjians have been synonymous with
excellence and innovation, from their inclusion
in classical music, to their use by the Jazz greats who
pioneered modern music earlier this century.

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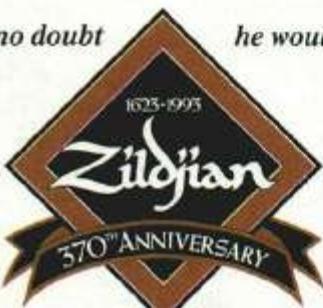
HOWEVER, FOR CENTURIES.

cymbal is a

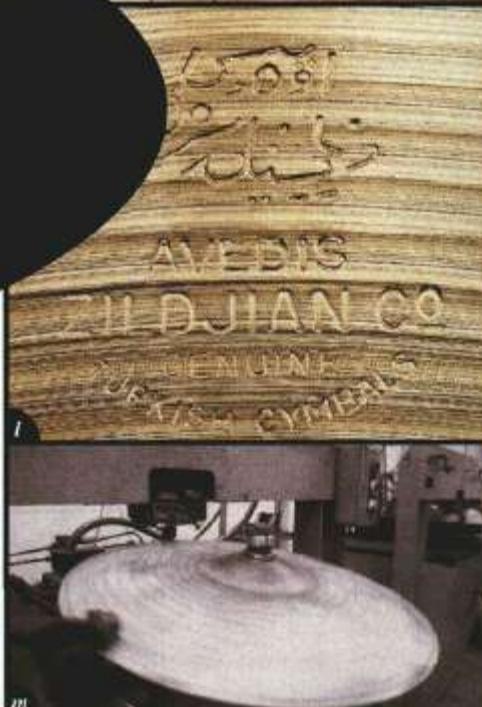
marriage of old world craftsmanship, modern
technology and the input of today's top drummers. And
this same uncompromising dedication to quality
is also evident in our drumsticks. So, naturally, we can't
say whether Avedis I would like today's music. But

no doubt he would be pleased to know that

370 years later, the
cymbals that bear his
name are really
the only serious choice.



"Three Hundred and Seventy Years
of Making Cymbal History."



i. Avedis III outside the original factory in Massachusetts.

j. Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa.

k. Avedis III and Gene Krupa.

l. If you don't see the Zildjian trademark, it's not a genuine Zildjian cymbal.

m. Every aspect of our production is strictly controlled to assure quality.

n. In every field of music, Zildjians are the most popular cymbal.

o. Music changes, the cymbal of choice doesn't: Chick Webb, Art Blakey, Neil Peart.

p. The Zildjian secret alloy.

IT'S QUESTIONABLE



DEFINING TERMS

A What is the difference between a studio drummer, a session drummer, and a tour drummer?

Jason Neal
Connersville IN

A At one time—primarily in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s—the major radio and television networks maintained their own broadcasting studios, and some of the larger record labels maintained their own recording facilities. These companies employed full-time drummers to provide the music for their programs or album projects. Since the drummers worked for the studios, they came to be known as "studio drummers."

More recently, full-time studios have given way to projects done on an independent basis at facilities all over the world. In some cases, drummers are called to do some or all of the tracks on an album, on other occasions it will be to record jingles, movie soundtracks, or other specialized types of music. The free-lance drummers who record these projects are generally hired for specific recording sessions, and thus have come to be known as "session drummers." However, since their work is still done in a recording studio, they can still be referred to as "studio drummers" to differentiate them from "live" or "touring" drummers.

A "tour" drummer can refer to a drummer who is a member of a band that tours in support of its own recordings. However, the term is more often used to describe a drummer who is hired by a given artist as part of a back-up band for one or more tours. In many cases, an artist will use "studio" musicians to record his or her album, and then put a band of "tour" musicians together to promote the album on the road. Each type of playing calls for slightly different skills. (There are, of course, drummers who play equally well in either situation.)

PRICES IN ADVERTISEMENTS?

A Why don't you put the prices of the drum equipment that you advertise in the advertisements? I feel that it would benefit many people if you were to do that.

John Harris
Kent WA

A The purpose of advertising by manufacturers is to inform you about the availability of a product, and get you interested in it enough to seek it out at your local retail store. It is the retailer who actually deals in prices, and different retailers will set different prices for the same items depending on their sales volume, regional economy, buyer demand, and many other factors. Since this differentiation in pricing exists, it would be pointless for the manufacturer—and disadvantageous for the retailer trying to negotiate with you directly—to include prices in ads.

However, for the purpose of comparative reference, you can check out *MD's 1993 Buyer's Guide*, which should be available by the time you read this. It contains the manufacturer's suggested retail prices for just about everything made for drummers. You can get it wherever you buy *Modern Drummer*.

BONGO AND CONGA HEADS

I I'm interested in using bongos and congas in my setup, but I'm not crazy about using heads made out of animal skin. Do all manufacturers use animal skins, or are there some that use *Mylar*? If not, why haven't they done so? It would seem that *Mylar* heads would be much better, otherwise we would all still be using calfskin heads on drums! Is there any method of using *Mylar* heads on congas and bongos?

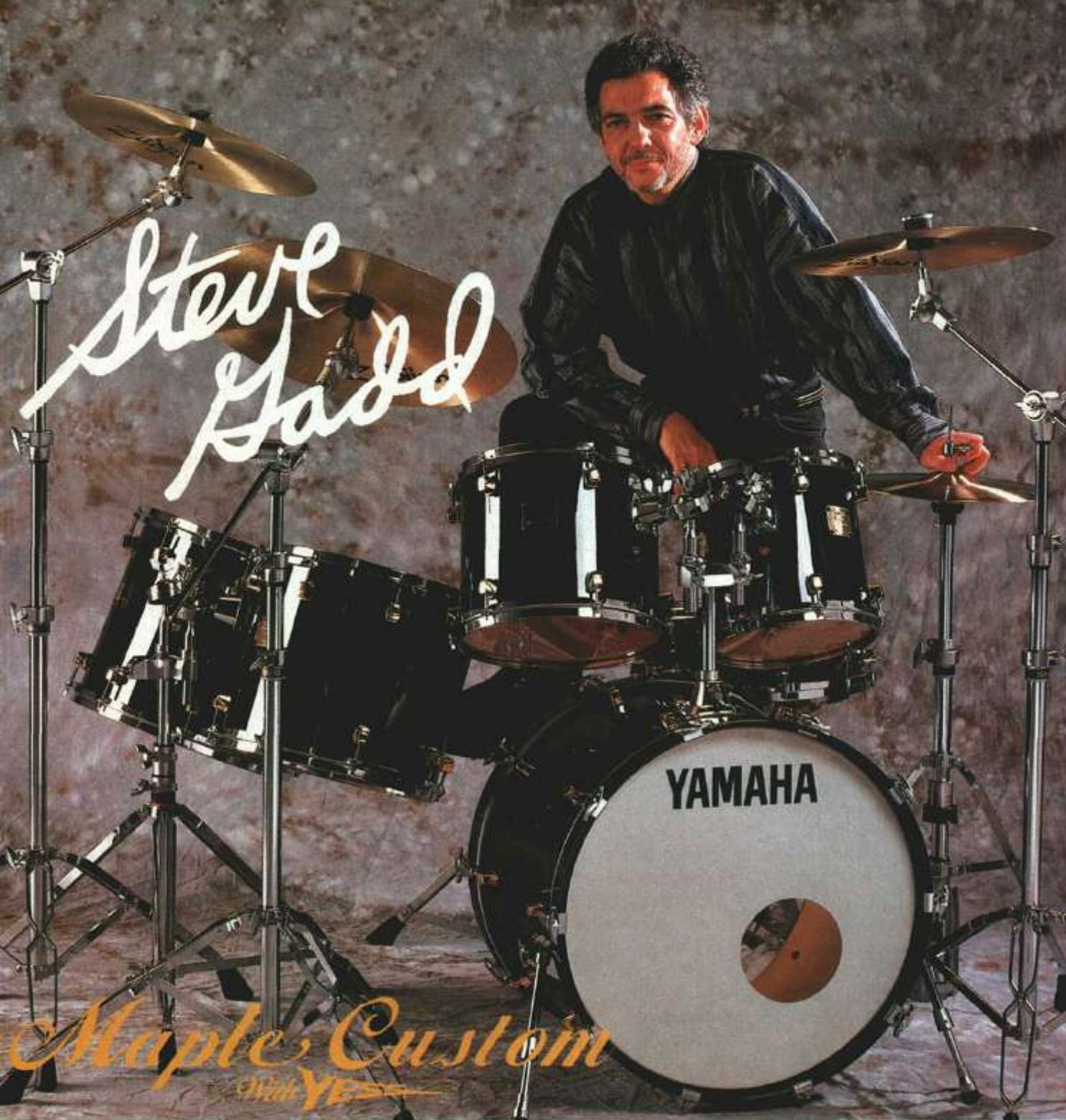
Tariq Khan
Quebec, Canada

A At one time, we all *did* use calfskin heads on drums, because that was what was available. But it had its problems, and the development of *Mylar* heads was seen as a great advancement by most drummers. It was more durable against stick impact, and was virtually weatherproof. However, it did produce a different sound. This sound proved to be acceptable to the majority of drummers in exchange for the benefits *Mylar* offered.

However, the warm, natural tone that is the trademark of Latin drums is heavily dependent on the character of animal skin heads. It is the desire to retain this authentic sound that has maintained the desire for skin heads on bongos and congas. Additionally, the construction of these drums makes them difficult to fit with anything but a skin head, since their shell thicknesses and bearing edges are very different from those of drumkit drums. Several years ago, the Rogers, Slingerland, and Ludwig drum companies all offered drumset-style tunable bongos, which could use *Mylar* heads. Remo still carries heads for these drums in its catalog, but the drums themselves have been discontinued.

BASS DRUM BACKGROUND

I I am intensely curious to know about an old drum I recently acquired. This Ludwig bass drum measures 26" in diameter and is 14" deep. It has wood hoops and a one-piece lug (T-rod) design. Under the surface paint, it seems to have an original "champagne sparkle" finish. The inner shell bears the number "4208," which can be seen by looking in the air hole of the drum. The oval logo plate around the air hole reads: "Ludwig trade mark" on the top and "Ludwig & Ludwig, Chicago, Illinois, Made in USA" on the bottom. Can you tell me when this drum was made? Is it a marching drum or part of a big band set?



Defining the Art of Drumming: Steve Gadd and Yamaha

His name is synonymous with excellence. Whatever the musical demand, Steve Gadd can deliver. Whether it's a driving funk beat, a swinging jazz feel or an in-the-pocket shuffle, Gadd will infuse it with his personal blend of intensity and taste, delivering contemporary grooves built on solid tradition. For over a decade Steve Gadd's chosen drums have been Yamaha—a perfect match of drummer and drumset. Versatile drums that can handle any type of gig. Drums that combine traditional craftsmanship of Maple Custom shells with modern technology of YEES tom mounts to produce responsive instruments that allow each drummer's individuality to come through.

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Chad Smith On...

• by Ken Micallef

Ask this Red Hot Chili Pepper about his favorite drummer, and you won't get yarns about heavy metal heathens or the Funky Drummer, parts one, two, or three. Chad Smith is a student of music history, and his favorite drummer is none other than studio legend Hal Blaine. "Hal is the coolest guy I know," says Chad. "And he tells the best stories. He's so full of life. And he thinks the Chili Peppers are groovy."

Chad's groovy, thundering beat can be heard on the Chili Peppers' *Mother's Milk* and *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* albums. His solid tempo and a smart use of plentiful chops have brought Chad to the attention of millions of Chili Pepper fans—and not a few drummers. Since the mid-'80s the Peppers have delivered a sound that combines greasy funk/metal/hipster slang/hip hop with all the politeness of an artillery cannon. Headlining last summer's Lollapalooza tour, the group appeared half-naked in diapers and bandannas (which didn't seem all that strange amidst a tour line-up that included glass eaters, bile drinkers, and one guy who stuck himself full of pins and needles). "We're a bowl of hardened Jello now," says Chad, regarding the result of months of touring. "On *Stood Sugar Sex Magik* we wanted to play for the songs, not just a lot of licks. After the touring we really love and respect each other; we know each other better now. We're maturing more as players and songwriters."

Who does Chad cite as influences? "The Marx Brothers, the 3 Stooges, and Robert DeNiro," he replies. "Life things more than just musicians."

...Steve Jordan

John Scofield: "Who's Who?" (from *Who's Who?*)

Jordan: drums; John Scofield: guitars; Kenny Kirkland: keyboards; Anthony Jackson: bass; Sammy Figueroa: percussion

CS: This is kind of a Weather Report thing. Not quite as ethereal as them. The drummer was good. Cymbal sounds were really cool, nice textures and colors. His left hand was killing. Lots of chops. In that sort of vein, it's a good medium to stretch out in. No vocalist to step on, it's instrumentally oriented.

KM: It's Steve Jordan.

CS: Oh, yeah. Back then he probably didn't have the double hi-hat thing going, right? He still got a lot of hi-hat into it. That was not bad. I wonder if he can still do all that?



...Stewart Copeland

Animal Logic: "Rose Colored Glasses" (from *Animal Logic II*)

Copeland: drums; Stanley Clarke: bass; Deborah Holland: vocals

CS: That's Stewart Copeland. He's got that amazing hi-hat technique. On Peter Gabriel's "Red Rain," which is mostly drum machine, he just plays hi-hat and it stands out. That's his signature. When the Police came out back in the '70s, everyone was into that wet, Eagles sound with the 9,000-foot snare drum. He brought a fresh, real tight thing. I sat behind him once in Detroit. He's the most powerful guy I've seen who plays traditional grip. His hands were all bandaged up, and he had that punk attitude—just slamming. It's nice that Copeland has done so much since the Police. He's written operas and soundtracks, done *The Rhythmatist*, and played in *Animal Logic*.

...Jeff Porcaro

Guitar Workshop: "Bawls" (from *Guitar Workshop In L.A.*)

Porcaro: drums; Teddy Castellucci: guitar; John Pena: bass; David Garfield: keyboards; Lenny Castro: percussion; Larry Klimas: tenor sax; Brandon Fields: Yamaha WX-7

CS: With that shuffle/swing groove I can immediately tell it's Jeff Porcaro. He was the king of that stuff. Ever since "Rosanna" he's been known for that. When we were recording *Mother's Milk*, he was doing a session with Natalie Cole in the next room. We were both using Drum Doctors, the drum rental service. Jeff came in to say hi at about 10:00 in the morning. We were playing, and I didn't even know he was there. Afterwards he said to me, "Hey man, we've got to break your arms or you'll be taking all my work!" I said, "Yeah, right!" He sat down to play a little bit and what did he do? Busted into a little shuffle, what else?

...Aaron Comess

Spin Doctors: "What Time Is It?" (from *Pocket Full Of Kryptonite*)

Comess: drums; Mark White: bass; Eric Schankman: guitars; Christopher Barren: vocals

CS: That sounds nice. Who is it?

KM: Aaron Comess with Spin Doctors.

CS: Oh, yeah? He sounds good. He's a little slick for my taste, but he can play. Those are interesting triplet fills he's playing in the bridge, and his touch is nice. He sounds like he practices a lot. Strong chops. Good player—absolutely.

For newer drummers, I'm into Fish from Fishbone, the drummer from the Bad Brains, and Stephen Perkins, who used to be in Jane's Addiction. Primus's drummer, Tim "Herb" Alexander, is happening, too. There are a lot of good players out there.

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Charlie Benante

Artistry In Motion

By Teri Saccone

I jokingly wondered whether the task before me would be an exercise in futility. On the surface, it seemed simple: an interview with drumming-star Charlie Benante. It wasn't his status as a groundbreaking metal player that intimidated me. It was the advice from his friends and family that had me nail-biting. His mother, for instance: "Charlie is a very nice boy. But he doesn't like to talk," she laughed. A close friend of his warned, "He's shy, but after he gets to know you a few years...."

Interviews rarely turn out the way one expects, and this was no different. It was clear that Benante spends a lot of time living inside his own head, within his thoughts. But under the right circumstances, he'll let you inside, as he did for this interview.

Sitting atop a speaker cabinet in a rehearsal room, wearing a black cap and staring at the floor, Benante deceptively looks no more than nineteen or twenty—still a kid from the neighborhood. He does, in fact, spend a lot of time with his large family back in the Bronx. But this guy from the neighborhood has, as the expression goes, "done good." He's been Anthrax's guiding force for nearly ten years, and he could be described as a total artist. In addition to a most celebrated drumming role, he is also the group's primary songwriter, occasional guitarist, and art director.

Sound Of White Noise, the new release from Anthrax, marks another shift in the winds for this ever-mutating heavy metal group. Originally branded as thrash-meisters, they've evolved with a

mischiefous changeability, skittering from punk to rap to psycho-metallic fury. *White Noise* sets aside much of the hardcore bombast of Anthrax's past, and in its place reveals chugging backbeats, eloquent songwriting, and vigorous interplay between dense guitars and drums. Even with the addition of a new lead singer (John Bush, formerly of Armored Saint) and a rawer, more grooving direction, Anthrax still keeps their musical identity intact.

In the cluttered, informal rehearsal room where we spoke, Benante confided that he has more to be proud of on this album than he has had in a while. Modestly, he admits, "The best reward about this new album is that it's something I created. And it's just a great feeling."



Photo by Ebet Roberts

TS: Judging by your last interview [May '88 MD], you seem pretty hard on yourself.

CB: I guess it's just the artist in me over-analyzing everything. Every artist is critical about his or her work because of insecurity. What always goes through my head are things like, "Is it good enough?" or, "Will people like what we're doing?" I have two ways of thinking on this: I have to please myself, and I have to please the fans. That's what's important. I eventually go with what the fans would like to hear and see.

TS: Since you write most of the songs, how do you go about putting your ideas across to the band?

CB: I'll come in with a handful of guitar riffs and parts, which I'll show to everybody, and we'll start to put songs together from that. Sometimes a song will take shape in just a matter of minutes. On the new album, the song "Room For One More" was written in a day because the parts I had just came together quickly. The song basically wrote itself.

Another song on this album, "The Black Lodge," I had written a long time ago. I had this piece of music for about two years, and it was inspired by the show *Twin Peaks*—the whole vibe of the show and of the music. It's a real moody piece, and it's kind of different for us. I always felt that I wasn't going to purposely write a slow type of song. But we've always said that if something happened to come up and it was good enough, we'd do it. That's what happened with this.

I like to give my friends tapes when we're putting together new songs, and have them tell me what they really think about them. Some of my friends came back after hearing "The Black Lodge" and said, "Do you know what

"There are other players who I think are good with two bass drums, but is the end result me having to race those guys?"

too. If some people have critical things to say, then I'll go back and rework it, just as I would when the guys in the band don't like something.

TS: Where do you get your inspiration for the art direction on your albums?

CB: It could be anything at all. I was driving here today, and something I saw on the street had me thinking. I could see a movie or read something, and that would have an effect. I was totally amazed with a Dali art exhibit I went to with Scott [Ian, guitar] in Stuttgart, Germany. We were there for three hours, and we were just in awe of what this man created. I got the idea for the cover of the *Persistence Of Time* album from his painting "Persistence Of Memory."

TS: People think of you as a drummer first, despite the fact that you are an accomplished guitarist and songwriter. But when you think of what you do, what's the first thing that pops into your head?

CB: I really love playing my guitar because I can just sit by myself and play as long as I want. I also love playing the drums, but sometimes it's a bit loud, and I can't just sit and be quiet with a set of drums. If I sit with a set of drums, I have to be *loud*—that's the bottom line. Plus, it's hard to write a song on the drums.

TS: Have you ever written a song on the drums?

CB: Occasionally I've started out with beats and then built the song around them. I think "Caught In A Mosh" was written with a beat in mind, and the guitar came afterwards. There's parts of "Belly Of The Beast" where I liked the beat and then thought of a riff to go with it. So it does happen, but most of the time I write on the guitar. As soon as I come up with a guitar riff, I automatically hear the beat. I guess my brain just naturally works that way.

White Noise

Here are the albums Charlie says best represent his drumming...

Artist	Album Title
Anthrax	Persistence Of Time
"	Among The Living
"	Spreading The Disease
"	State Of Euphoria
"	Sound Of White Noise
S.O.D.	Speak English Or Die

...and here are the albums he says he listens to most for inspiration

Artist	Album Title	Drummer
U.K.	Night After Night	Terry Bozio
James Brown	In The Jungle Groove	Clyde Stubblefield
KISS	Alive	Peter Criss
Rush	Exit Stage Left	Neil Peart
Beastie Boys	Paul@S Boutique	various
The Beatles	Revolver	Ringo Starr
Black Sabbath	Sabotage	Bill Ward

TS: Your previous release, *Persistence Of Time*, had an emphasis on speed, being primarily a thrash album. *Sound Of White Noise* is very guitar-oriented, but there's a major emphasis on grooves—just heavy, solid, feel playing that doesn't blitz the listener with pure speed.

CB: This album is a collection of songs that range from tracks people can instantly identify as sounding like us to things that are a bit out of left field. But they still have a metal flavor to them, even though they've been inspired by different things.

TS: Your double-bass drumming is legendary in the heavy metal world, yet you've chosen to not go that route for most of the tracks on the new album.

CB: The reason for that is I just didn't feel the parts called for it. If something calls for it, then I do it, but I can't just put it in. There are parts on the album where there is double bass, and it dominates the music, but sometimes I just believe less is more. I don't like

drummers who overplay. I love a nice fill. There's this Prince song, "Diamonds And Pearls," which has a drum fill that is amazing. It's not much, but what the drummer does just lends so much to that part. Stuff like that—the little subtle fills—leave more of an impression on me than the big ones.

We have a song on the new album called "Burst," and from start to finish, it's a burst of energy that doesn't stop. I don't have a break in the song, and that's fine with me because that's the way it should be played. There are other songs where I'll have a little bit of a breather, letting the drums breathe with the music. On past albums, members of the band have complained that they sometimes can't hear their own parts on the record. You have to understand the frequencies. If you have a heavy guitar sound, you're pretty much gonna lose some of the bass because the guitar overpowers many of the bass frequencies. Sometimes with the kick drums when

there's a real fast double-bass part, you can't hear it so you have to EQ it a different way to make sure the attack is prominent. But that's just one of those studio things you have to go through.

TS: Does having those lightning fast of yours ever become a trap?

CB: Let me put it this way: There are other players who I think are good with two bass drums, but is the end result me having to race these guys? To me, it's not about trying to outdo anybody, and I'm not trying to win a poll. Too many younger drummers think it's about how fast you play. That doesn't matter. Whatever the song calls for, that's what I deliver.

TS: We discussed the fact that your playing and the overall songs have often had a big emphasis on speed in the past, which has drawn a lot of fans in. On the other hand, some of your playing is so fast that it's a blur. Do you think that sometimes the speed sacrifices what's being heard?

CB: I guess it can. I remember the



first time I played something really fast. It was a song called "Gung Ho," off our second album. A lot of people didn't actually believe I was doing it—they thought it was a drum machine. I just didn't understand why people would think that way. Why would I do that? What's the big deal? Besides, you can't fake that live, and I usually play even faster live.

Getting back to this album, there are big drum parts on this one—some really good beats on there. As you said, there is a lot of guitar, and I guess that's the first thing that you hear, because the guitars are mixed loud. But there are so many good drum parts on the album—they really drive the songs. It's definitely not as speed-oriented as in the past.

TS: We were just talking about your not playing so much double bass on *White Noise*. How did that affect your performance?

CB: I'm using my hands a lot more than the bottom half of my body. In the studio, we had two kits set up: my normal double-bass kit, and a small single-kick kit, because I just wanted a different sound and approach. There are some songs on this album that call for just kick, snare, two toms, and cymbals—and my playing is totally different on a kit like that. I can use my hands more in this situation, rather than letting my feet take control. There are fills on this record where I use double kicks, but sometimes it just doesn't call for that. Also, since so many other drummers now do that stuff, it's played out—it's tired.

TS: How did having two kits affect the vibe in the studio?

CB: When I got out to the studio in L.A., the producer, Dave Jerdan, brought in this guy called the Drum Doctor, who I hadn't worked with before. I've never been interested in using anybody else to pick drums for me or tune my drums. I know what my drums should sound like. Dave felt strongly about using this guy, so I agreed. It worked out okay, but it was still a 50/50 split because I used what I wanted, though it was their toms and a couple of different snare drums. It was weird to have someone else do it for

me. I used my own hardware, racks, and cymbals. Everything else was theirs.

TS: Was there a drastic difference in using the rented drums rather than your own?

CB: Well, I didn't hear a big difference. I flipped out a bit at first because I wasn't told about it. It was our money and it was being spent that way without my knowledge. But aside from that, I got along with Dave pretty well because we look at things in the studio basically the same way. I was glad the way it worked out between us.

TS: How does a producer generally fit into the scenario with Anthrax? The band appears to have little need for outsiders.

CB: As far as whether we are a self-produced band, the answer is yes and no. I take a lot of control in the studio. On the last two albums, I was pretty into it. I pretty much helped produce and mix the stuff on *Killer B's* because I know what we're supposed to sound like. As I said, for the new album we had Dave Jerdan, who worked previously with Alice In Chains, Jane's Addiction, and PiL.

The diagram illustrates Charlie Benante's drum kit setup. It features 12 numbered components (1 through 12) and labeled parts (A through I). Components 1 through 12 are represented by orange circles, while parts A through I are represented by blue circles. The numbered components are arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with 1 at the bottom left, 2 to its left, 3 above 1, 4 above 3, 5 above 4, 6 to the right of 5, 7 below 6, 8 to the right of 7, 9 below 8, 10 to the right of 9, 11 below 10, and 12 to the right of 11. The labeled parts are positioned around the numbered components: A is at the bottom left, B is to the left of 3, C is below 4, D is to the right of 5, E is below 6, F is to the right of 7, G is below 8, H is to the right of 9, and I is above 10.

Charlie's Kit

Drumset: Tama Artstar II

- A. 16x16 floor tom
- B. 8x8 tom
- C. 10 x 10 tom
- D. 10 x 12 tom
- E. 8x 14 snare
- F. 11x13 tom
- G. 12x 14tom
- H. 16 x 18 floor tom
- I. 22 x 24 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste signature series (except where noted)

- 1. 13" Sound Edge hi-hats
- 2. 16" Rude crash
- 3. 18" 2000 crash
- 4. 18" Fast crash
- 5. 20" 3000 Rude crash
- 6. 17" 3000 Rude crash
- 7. 13" Dark Crisp hi-hats
- 8. 14" 1000 Rude crash

Hardware: All Tama, including a rack system and Camco chain-drive bass drum pedals with Danmar felt beaters, Jopa cowbells

Heads: Ludwig Silver Dot on snare, Remo clear Emperors on tops of toms, with clear Ambassadors on bottoms, C.S. (black dots) on bass drums

Sticks: Vic firth SD 11 Slammer model

One thing I really liked was that he brought in a PA—which was actually in the room with me—and it created a whole live sound and feel. A lot of stuff was being pumped through the PA, and all the ambient and room mic's were picking up the sounds. The recorded sound was amazing, just this live, powerful sound. Plus the room at A&M Studios is great.

So the recording started out with a little confusion, but after that, things just clicked. To be totally honest with you, I don't hear any records out there now that sound anything like this album. I hear a lot of bands, and most of them sound alike. I hate when people try to just copy somebody else. Why can't you just sound like yourself? This is what makes music difficult for me to listen to—the unoriginal crap out there.

TS: Getting back to the recording, did you use any unusual percussion?

CB: Aside from the bongos that I

used, I wanted the sound of a big church chime, so Paiste brought me down two plates. I used one for "This Is Not An Exit," and it gave it an eerie effect.

Another thing that sounded totally amazing was the snare drum that I used, which was a Tama *Bell Brass*. The drum was so heavy, and I always felt that a heavy drum wouldn't sound good. But I hit it and it was amazing, so I used it for the whole record.

The best thing for a drummer is hitting something that is pleasing. There's usually a difference in the sound and the feel of the drums from one night to the next when we're touring because of the room. There are some nights when the drums just don't feel right and I'm really struggling to get through. Then there are other nights when the drums are just singing, and it's such a pleasant feeling just to hit them. Those are the nights that I live for. When you like

what you're hitting, that's the beauty of it. When they sound good and feel good, I could just play all night.

TS: Will that heavy snare accompany you on the road?

CB: I don't know yet. I have a few snares that sound good live. This drum might not work live, but I'll try it.

TS: Will you take your standard kit or the smaller one out for the tour?

CB: I'll be keeping my normal kit for the tour. It did cross my mind to get rid of the other kick drum. But when you look at it, a double-kick set seems bigger and more balanced—and sort of intimidating. I also think some fans would be disappointed if they didn't see the bigger kit.

Also, it's better having the double kit because if you're playing really fast 16th notes, you're not gonna have an accurate feel off a double pedal. The notes don't come through as clean as

continued on page 60



Photo by Ebet Roberts

Michael

k

e

r

with Whitney Houston

Growing up, Michael Baker never imagined he'd be playing jazz at all, let alone making a living as one of "the cats."

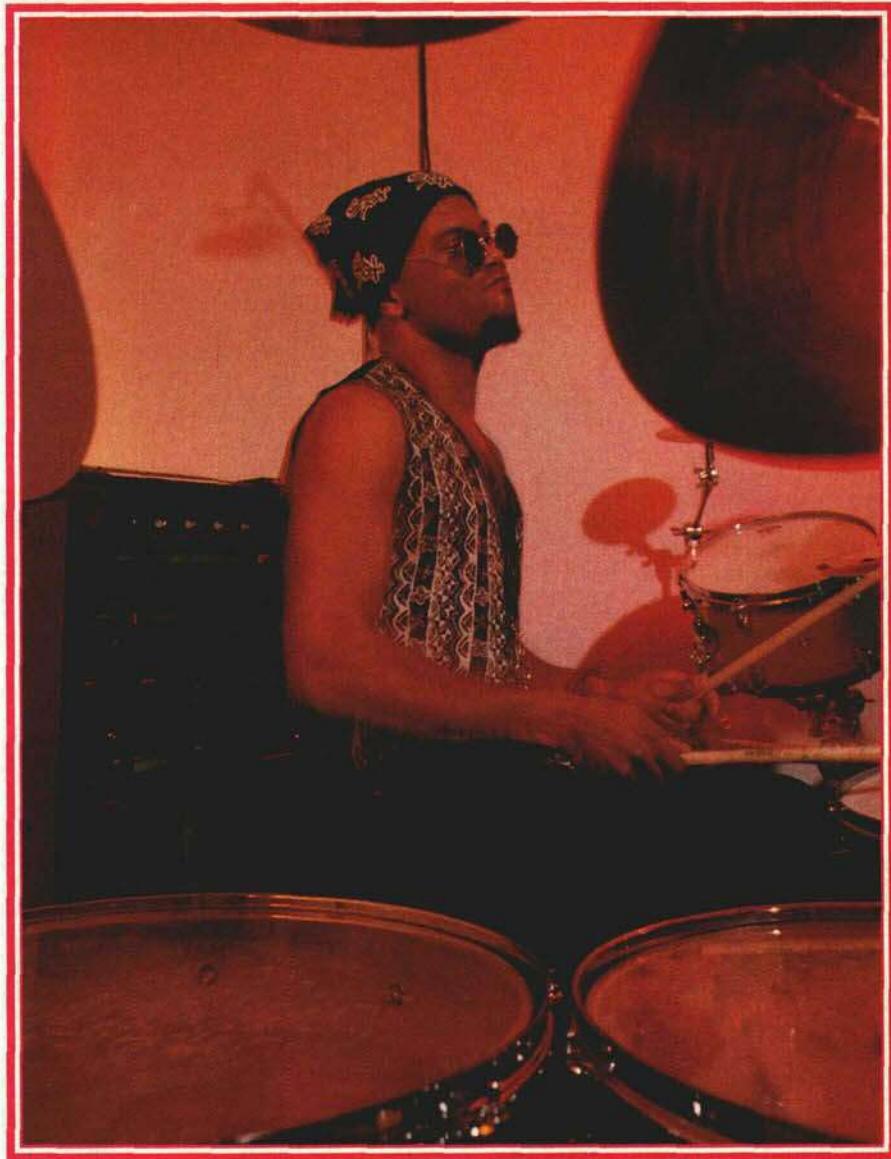
Though it's an understatement to say he's "done well" on gigs with Clark Terry, Joe Zawinul, Billy Childs, Freddie Hubbard, Jimmy Smith, and Phil Upchurch, jazz was never what he really pursued.

Pop/rock is Baker's first and everlasting love—and he *did* manage to keep in touch with mainstream music by working with commercial artists like Marilyn McCoo and Dionne Warwick along the way. Actually, while playing with McCoo, Michael's career was nearly curtailed when doctors discovered a ten-pound tumor surrounding his colon and going all the way up under his ribs. After the surgery, it took some time for him to rebuild his strength. Michael remembers using 2B and 5B sticks to compensate for his lack of physical power, and says it took nearly four years to regain all his fortitude.

By Robyn Flans

Photos by Michael Bloom





Baker's Dozen

Here are the albums Michael says best represent his drumming...

Artist	Album Title
Bobby Lyle	Secret Island
"	Ivory Dreams
"	The Journey
Billy Childs	Twilight Is Upon Us
Zawinul Syndicate	His April Touch
Gerald Veasley	Take For Example This
	Lost Tribes
	Look Ahead

. .and here are the albums he says he listens to most for inspiration.

Artist	Album Title	Drummer
Jodeci	Joded	none
Youssou N'Dour	The Lion	Manu Katche
Milton Nascimento	Encontros E Despedidas	Robertinho Silva
Oregon	45th Parallel	Trilok Gurtu
John Scofield	Pick Hits	Dennis Chambers

Baker came back with a vengeance, though, and today, his gig with Whitney Houston is closer to his pop roots than any of his recent gigs. And while Houston is on maternity hiatus, he's been playing with Kirk Whalum, Gerald Albright, and Bobby Lyle, and working on a project with Andy Summers—not to mention composing and playing his own music.

Baker's obviously a musician with a lot of fingers in a lot of pies. His writing skills have resulted in his having songs appear on the soundtrack to the film *The Five Heartbeats* and on a Phil Upchurch album. He also sings, recently recording a vocal for a Gerald Veasley album and on the project with Summers. Not surprisingly, Michael says his ultimate goal is to enjoy a multi-faceted career, much like those of Don Henley and Phil Collins. No doubt the following will only be Chapter One in the life of Michael Baker.

RF: When you realized you wanted to be a drummer, what made you want to go to school for it?

MB: I was playing hard rock for many years, and I wanted to learn some other things and get better.

RF: What made you feel like you needed to know more?

MB: I knew about jazz, but I wasn't influenced by it at all. I had no background in it, but it was something I really wanted to find out about. So I thought that was the music to go and learn.

My mother turned me on to Quincy Jones, Miles Davis, and all that. I hated it, though; I didn't want any part of it. I had been playing rock so long with this huge drumkit. I was in a somewhat successful band. We almost had our own stage. The band had its own PA, and there were four guys traveling with us to help us put our setup together. We had an eighteen-foot Ryder truck filled with equipment. We were a fairly successful band in that area—Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin. I'd come home with my ears ringing after the concerts, though.

Like I said, though, my mother had all this jazz music around the house that I never listened to. One day, I remember my ears were ringing and I really wanted

to hear some music, but nothing too hard. So I put on Miles Davis's *Seven Steps To Heaven*, which was really soothing. It was nice to hear, so I started listening to jazz because my ears were ringing so much. It still didn't really thrill me as much, because nothing could replace the feeling of thrashing for four hours. To me, that was it!

Jazz wasn't something I *wanted* to do; it was more of a thing that you were *supposed* to do... "Oh, you play jazz, that means you're great." Clark Terry, the jazz trumpet player, did a clinic at our high school, and I met him. My mother invited him to dinner. He really dug what I was doing. I wasn't really playing good jazz, but I guess he felt I had promise. I wanted to take it a little farther and learn more about music in general.

I went to North Texas State as a music composition major, not as a percussion major. I write. My approach to drums is not drums, *per se*. It's more about music.

RF: I'm kind of intrigued by the fact that you really weren't into jazz, though you thought you *should* be.

MB: God takes us a lot of places we can't possibly think about. We think we're running the show, and we are absolutely not. I would never have thought in my wildest dreams that I would be playing jazz. I don't consider myself a jazz drummer. I never lived the jazz lifestyle, I always wanted to be rich and famous—and I don't think that's the right motivation for jazz music. For that you have to be totally dedicated to the music. I never felt in my heart that I had the dedication that others had to play jazz. It's a beautiful music, but....

RF: So it was more of an acquired taste for you.

MB: Definitely. It was also many years studying the art form. Because of the people who have



Michael's Set

Drumset:

Yamaha Rock Tour Custom in black finish

- A. 7x13 *Akira Jimbo* model snare
- B. 5x14 *Manu Katche* model snare
- C. 10x8 tom
- D. 10x10 tom
- E. 12x12 tom
- F. 14x14 floor tom
- G. 16x16 floor tom
- H. 18x22 bass drum

Cymbals:

Zildjian A Custom series

- 1. 8" splash
- 2. 14" hi-hats (using two bottom cymbals)
- 3. 15" crash
- 4. 17" crash
- 5. 20" ping ride
- 6. 16" crash
- 7. 13" K/Z hi-hats
- 8. 18" China Boy high

Hardware:

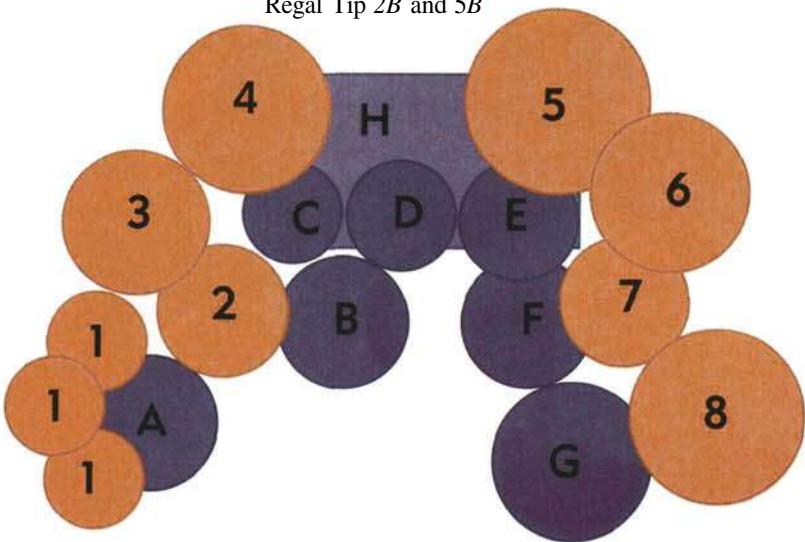
All Yamaha, including a double pedal and rack system

Heads:

Remo Ambassador on snare, clear *Emperors* on tops of toms with clear *Diplomats* on bottoms, *Powerstroke* with a *Remo Muffl* on bass drum

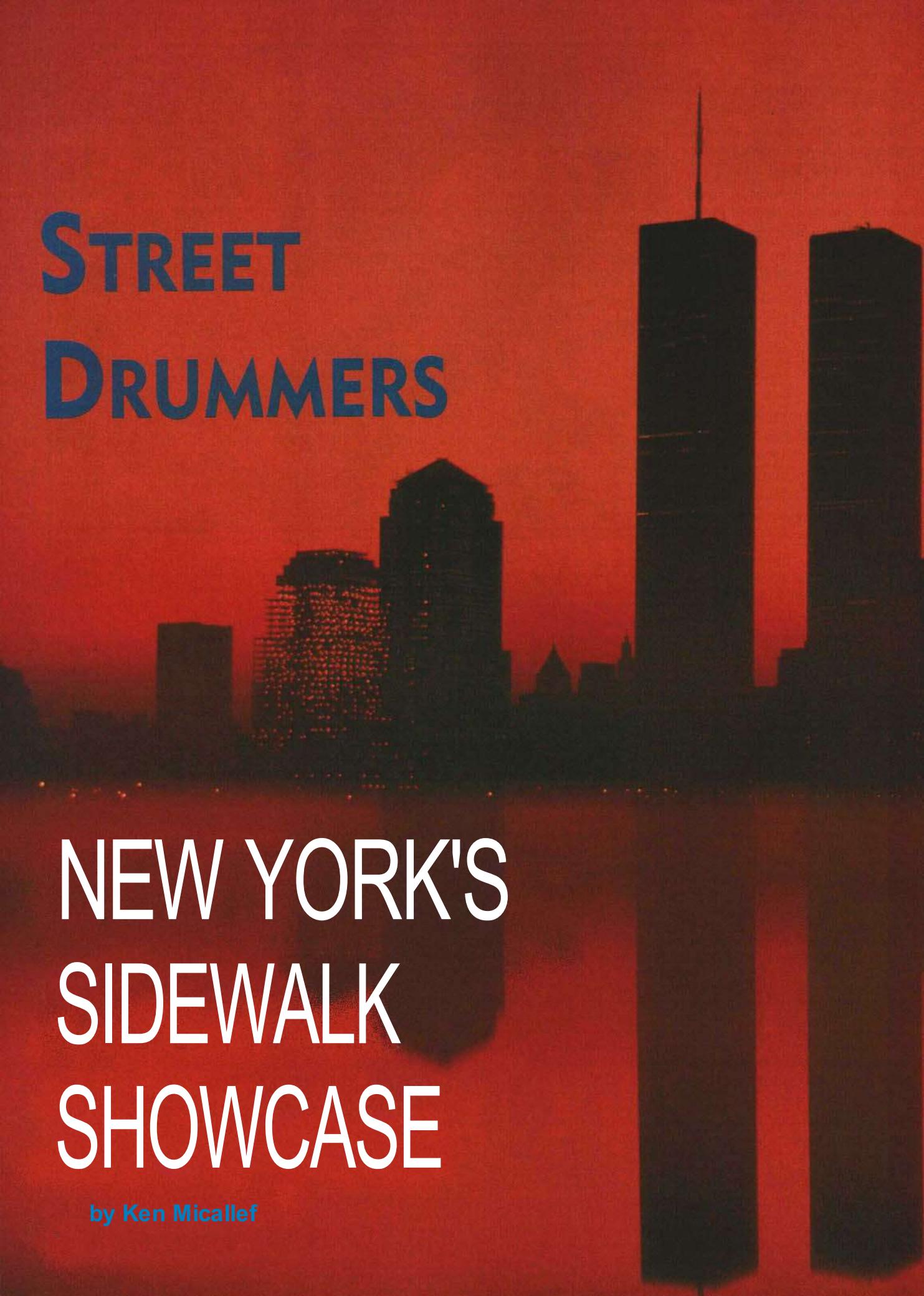
Sticks:

Regal Tip 2B and 5B



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STREET DRUMMERS

A silhouette of the New York City skyline is centered against a solid red background. The skyline includes the Twin Towers and several other skyscrapers. The towers are particularly prominent on the right side.

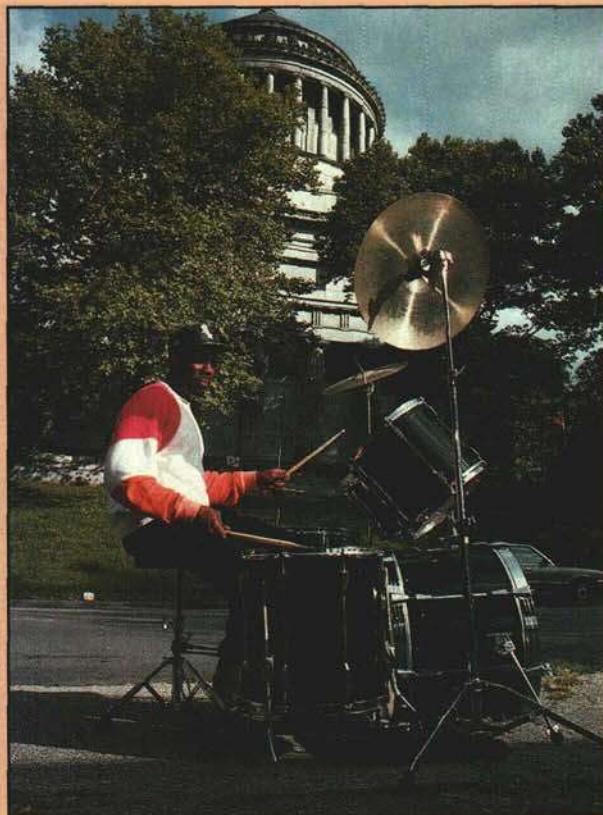
NEW YORK'S
SIDEWALK
SHOWCASE

by Ken Micallef



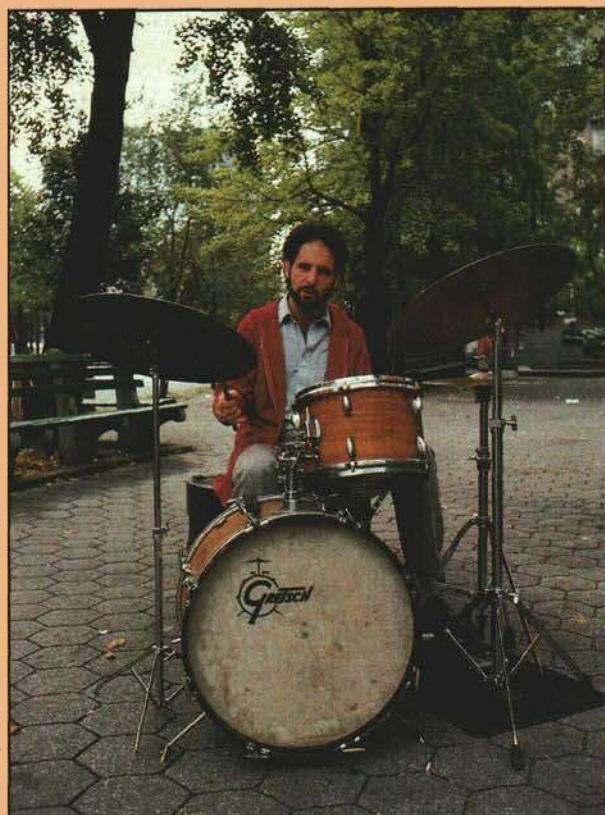
Times Square. Brooklyn Courthouse. Central Park
Walk by any of these crowded New York landmarks on
a typical sunny day, and chances are you'll hear some ambitious
soul with his instrument either attracting an attentive crowd or
entertaining an empty spot on the sidewalk.

The variety of talent on the street is surprising: folkies in Washington Square Park; tipsy singers who think they're Sinatra crooning for their supper on MacDougal Street; Japanese jazz quartets in the financial district; conga drummers on the Lower East Side; Russian chamber quartets on the Brooklyn Promenade.



Ayan Williams performing at one of his favorite spots, Grant's Tomb

Photo by Ebet Roberts



Mike Campenni stakes out the best places in Central Park to perform.

with greased-back hair in a purple tuxedo who would play his snare drum around Times Square. "Now we go back twenty years to the rudimental rumblings of Chick Webb," he would proclaim, launching into a hot, high-sticking foray. His talent landed him a bit part in the film *Taxi Driver* and a spot on *The Phil Donahue Show*.

Though many have side projects in the works, most street drummers will never become famous. They work hard, day to day, like drummers across the country. But with factors like the weather, police, and the audience's generosity playing a big part in their livelihood, these musicians have to depend on their ingenuity and street smarts to make a living.

Band Wars

Dick Weller and the BMF Band (Brooklyn Musical Foundation) are playing a lunchtime hit in Times Square. Attracting a crowd of Broadway ticket buyers, the band is sailing through a smoking version of Grover Washington's "Mr. Magic." Playing a PureCussion Headset, Weller not only looks like Peter Erskine, he plays with



With only three pieces, Sadiq Abdushahid enthralls the crowds in Times Square.

Photo by Ebet Roberts

Perhaps the most famous street drummer ever was a short, penguin-like fellow

the same rolling intensity and fire. A graduate of Cal State Northridge (with a degree in jazz composition), Weller epitomizes the great unknown-player syndrome we've all heard about. Weller and BMF have been on the streets for four years now, playing bebop and fusion. Their repertoire includes "Four," "Straight No Chaser," "Pools," and some Maynard Ferguson tunes.

The crowd grows as the five-piece unit plays faster and louder with each tune. With cars and buses passing on both sides of this billboard-walled canyon, BMF's flying funk fits right in. "Initially," says Weller, "I heard you could make some money doing this, and I wasn't playing much. I was just out of college. The first night I didn't make much bread—about \$17 down at South Street Seaport."

The amount of money you can make depends largely on how hard you're willing to work. Ten-hour days are not uncommon for BMF, playing "steady hits" like Columbus Circle (59th Street), WC Handy Place (53rd Street and 6th Ave.), and the Cooper Union Building (St. Mark's Place), all locations with lots of sidewalk traffic and high visibility. "You've got to pass the hat, or 'box,' as we call it, or grab the lid of a case—whatever. It helps to weed the crowd. If people aren't willing to pay money, that will usually make them walk away. It keeps the crowd turning over. That's the psychology of it: Box hard or your bread's not going to be as high. Our philosophy is to throw down, take no prisoners. The people respond to energy. It's a ridiculous environment to maintain as a band—just throwing your stuff down on the street and going for it. It takes a lot of work."



Dick Weller and his BMF band find some busy spots to perform in—even with his backside practically in traffic!

The take for this hot July day will be \$60 per man. That's the lunch-time hit and a rush-hour hit, 4:30 till 7:00. If unhassled by the police, they can play longer and make as much as \$75 a man. "It's kind of a mercenary mentality," says Weller. "That's how the hits are. You decide when your next hit will be at the end of the current one. [Tracking these guys down was no easy task, let me assure you.] You make your bread and go home. You're out there; you're breaking the law; you're passing the hat to get money. And the cops can shut



The flamboyant Tony Walls is a favorite NYC performer.

you down any time they want. You can have a big crowd, and the cops will come up and say, 'Show's over.' Everyone usually boos the cops."

But for the cagey musician, these difficulties represent a challenge. How do you set up and play before the cops know you're there? How do you stun the crowd into emptying their wallets? "We have another strategy we call 'guerilla hits,'" says Weller. "We descend on a spot, set up as quickly as possible, and start knocking out the real high-energy stuff. After every solo, we pass the hat. Sometimes we can play up to an hour before the cops discover we're there."

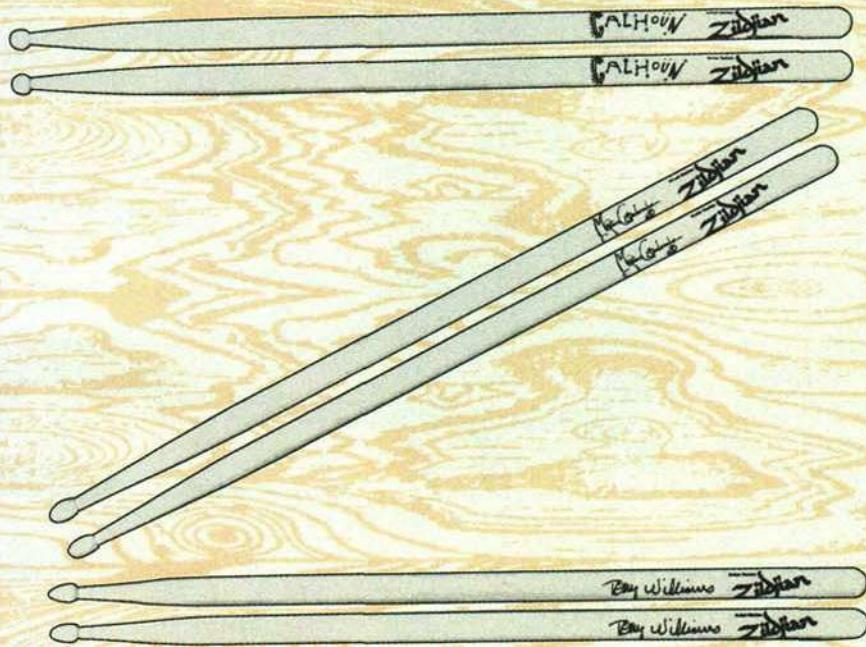
With many blocks in Manhattan crawling with homeless people, street bands have to contend with the occasional bum looking to perform. Everyone wants a piece of the action. "They're like mosquitos to blood," says Weller. "Once an activity starts on the street, they always gravitate towards it. There's a guy in Brooklyn who we call 'The King' because he wears this papier-mache crown. He always shows up and jumps in front of the band. He goes into this crazy bum dance, making faces. Then he rolls all over the ground. It's amusing for a while. Our bass player grabbed him once and hauled him off and was going to trounce him but a cop intervened."

Occasionally, two bands will claim the same space. Wars have ensued over lesser things. "Once, we got to Herald Square and another band was playing on our turf. Time for the guerilla hit. We set up about thirty feet away and started jamming. Both bands were playing as loud as possible—it sounded like John Cage! We kept moving closer and closer, screaming full tilt, trying to blow the other band away. We were duking it out!"

"Playing on the street has taught me how to make the most of an opportunity," Weller explains. "I've looked up while playing and have seen Omar Hakim, Will Lee, Jeff Watts—lots of cats watching. It's not like a desperate attitude we have. It's

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Inside



Zildjian Drumsticks

By Rick Van Horn

Back in 1986, the Zildjian company announced the introduction of a line of drumsticks. Initial reaction from drummers on the street generally amounted to: "Why?"

There seemed to be plenty of companies already specializing in sticks. Why should the world's largest cymbal company—one dealing exclusively in metal products—get involved with manufacturing a wood product? What did Zildjian know about making drumsticks?

Lanny Marsh, Zildjian's vice president of operations,

explains the company's thinking at the time. "We felt it was a natural extension of percussion manufacturing," says Lanny. "We knew what part drumsticks play in the creation of sound on a cymbal. It wasn't as far-fetched as it seemed for us to actually get involved in the creation of those sticks. Also, at that time the company was branching out to have a better range of accessories, and drumsticks seemed a natural part of that progression. And some additional motivation came from drummers we were associated with who said, 'You guys

make quality cymbals, can't you do something with sticks?'"

The cost of tooling up to manufacture sticks prevented Zildjian from actually making their own sticks right away. Instead, as marketing/artist relations manager John DeChristopher explains, "We bought our sticks from a local manufacturer. But in so doing, we had no control over the manufacturing—we were a secondary interest for this company. We had some success, but we were frustrated because we didn't have any input in terms of models.

Although we didn't have a lot of endorsers at that stage, those we did have would ask us if we could try some different things...and our hands were tied."

The company needed to take their operations to what Lanny Marsh calls "the next level. That was a joint venture with a manufacturer in Maine," he explains. "I did a lot of road-tripping through Maine trying to find a good woodworking company experienced at turning things, like furniture spindles. After we decided on one, we invested in a certain amount of equip-

ment, and they did the same. In 1987 and '88, we spent a lot of time improving the manufacturing and the sourcing of the wood. With this system, we now had the volume we needed, and better control."

But the fledgling drumstick division very rapidly found out that they needed to create more models—especially endorser models. However, as Lanny describes, "With the joint venture, we started to hear, 'Oh, a unique model? That's going to be a problem. We might not be able to do that.' We discovered that we could have volume, but we couldn't have the variety we needed. But that wasn't the thing that *really* got us. We got into a wood problem. All of a sudden, our vendors up there didn't have wood. Maine is full of forests, but they're not hickory forests."

One of Zildjian's hickory sources was in the area of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Conducting business in that area led them to Tuscaloosa Timber, a woodworking company situated in the heart of hickory country. It made sense to have some part of the operation based where the wood was, so the decision was made to have Tuscaloosa Timber make hickory dowels, which they would ship to the factory in Maine to be turned into sticks.

"We started to cultivate this wood source *along with* the joint manufacturing venture in Maine," says *John DeChristopher*, "so we were well positioned to develop the number of endorser models and other specials that we wanted yet, and that we still didn't have a lock on the wood. And the system wasn't economical, either. We'd move dowels from Alabama to the factory

in Maine, turn them into 73s,

and discover that 50% of them were too red or had mineral streaks in them, and were unusable. We thought, 'This is crazy. Only the truckers are getting rich, because we're paying to ship what becomes waste.' We couldn't sell sticks that weren't top quality, because we wanted to market a consistently superior product. Our drummers were telling us, 'I buy the

tremendous learning process—along with enjoying significant growth. "We had real good days in '89 and '90," says Lanny, "with high volume. But we also had periods of low volume. But now we have consistently high volume. That's what's been going on for the past year. We have two and a half times the amount of tooling that we had in 1988. In terms of giving endorsers what they want, or

homework. We realized that, in order for us to really make an impact on the drumstick market, we needed to have our own facility, control our own manufacturing, and have people dedicated to certain responsibilities. Until we got to that point, we had been operating with people who were really one or two steps removed from where they ought to be in terms of controlling things. The advertising budget was considerably smaller then, too. The feeling that the consumer had was that this was just a little side-venture for Zildjian.

"Most drummers' reaction to the first stick ads," continues John, "was: 'Why would Zildjian waste their time?' It wasn't until I was given this responsibility that I realized that the drumstick market is almost as big as the cymbal market, in terms of dollar volume. And the Zildjian company—with the experience that it's had throughout the years and knowing what it knows from a business standpoint—was able to position itself to come into the market as a serious contender.

There's tremendous momentum now. We now have the support of a solid dealer base—which we did not have in 1989."

John's last comment seems surprising, given the market recognition of the Zildjian name. Once the stick division overcame the initial questions about why Zildjian was making sticks at all, one would think the name would have been a major asset.

"Well, it did allow us to start fast," agrees Lanny Marsh, "in a way that other new stick companies would not have enjoyed. But it was still pretty obvious that dealers were inundated with stick



(From left) Randy Raper, John DeChristopher, and Lanny Marsh guide Zildjian's drumstick operations. "Zildjian South" is the nickname affectionately given to Tuscaloosa Timber.

same stick model in January and March, and they don't feel the same. Can you guys help me?"

"When we asked ourselves how we could achieve both consistency and quality," Lanny continues, "we saw that our best chance was to stop fooling around, buy the Alabama operation, put our own equipment in, and take control of the whole process. That meant we had to develop the skills necessary to make the sticks ourselves. That's when our efforts started to focus on this building."

During the period from 1989 through early 1992, the company went through a

creating slight variations to meet market demand, we have quite a tooling library now to do those things."

MARKETING

It's one thing to learn how to make drumsticks. It's another to enter a market already crowded with other brands—some of which are established leaders. What made the Zildjian company think that they could break into this market in any significant manner? John DeChristopher responds, "While the manufacturing changes were taking place in the period between '86 and '89, we continued to do our

were developing the number of endorser models and other specials that we wanted yet, and that we still didn't have a lock on the wood. And the system wasn't economical, either. We'd move dowels from Alabama to the factory

brands already. On top of that, with the amount of artist-model sticks surfacing among all the competitors, people were telling us, 'Look, we just don't have the room for any more models.' But when we developed the 6A, Z4A, and Super 5B program in the spring of 1990, that was the real icebreaker for us. We came in with some unique models that fit into a real popular range. All of a sudden there was a legitimacy to the Zildjian stick line. It became, 'Well, I've got a demand for 5Bs, so I'll stock yours. And this Z4A is a little bit different and I've got some people interested, so I'll take that, too.' That was the beginning of us making a statement in terms of our ability to develop unique models."



After being cut to length, boards are passed through an eight-bladed saw to create 3/4"-thick blanks.



Thousands of blanks are turned into dowels each day.

STICK DEVELOPMENT

Developing drumsticks—whether "unique models" or old standards—is a team effort at Zildjian. Since early 1990, that team has consisted of Lanny Marsh, John DeChristopher, and Randy Raper. Randy is the plant manager for Tuscaloosa Timber, which is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Zildjian and is dedicated almost exclusively to the manufacture of drumsticks.

Lanny outlines how this group functions. "John works with the endorsers to get specifically what they want—in drum language. He translates it to me so I can put it into engineering terms. Together, we try to put the idea on paper for Randy, who further translates it into production instructions for the people who operate the

manufacturing machines."

When a stick design idea comes in, the first step is to turn that idea into a physical sample, which is given to the artist who suggested the idea for evaluation. Lanny explains, "You never get it the first time, so there's an interpretive process. John gives the prototype to the drummer, who says, 'shorten it' or 'thicken the neck' or whatever. We do that, and send it back. A given stick goes through anywhere from three to fifteen variations. Many drummers have no concept of the physics of a drumstick. As a result, we could give them exactly what they ask for on the first prototype, and only then might they realize that what they asked for won't work, and certainly won't give them what they really want. Then we start working on the stick to achieve their real goal. It can be a challenge. But you have to go through this process in order to learn how to do it. We weren't very good at it three years ago. I think that now, after we've done it so

much, we've got it down."

John DeChristopher adds, "We can sit down and discuss details in terms of what exists in the line now. We can say, 'We'll take the shaft of a 5B, the neck of a Z4A, and the tip of a Rock....' We have a vocabulary that we can use to build a new model on paper before it goes into prototype production. We're proud of the fact that, as a group, we can now translate statements made in a hotel room in Anaheim to a plant in Tuscaloosa. Within a week and a half we can be making a first prototype for someone, and we can get to a production point on that stick typically within eight weeks total. Three years ago I would have said sixteen to twenty-five weeks."

ENDORSER PROGRAM

In today's marketing strategy, developing a meaningful endorser program seems to be as important as developing a quality product. John DeChristopher states, "In 1989, when we toured the fac-



Dowels are shaped into sticks by stone grinding wheels. Each stone is surfaced with half the contour of a given stick model, according to a steel template.



This pull-testing machine tests how securely a nylon tip is affixed to a stick.

tory for the first time after the purchase, it was Armand Zildjian who said that drumsticks were going to be a big part of our future—that we were going to do it in a serious way—and that we needed some 'big guys' to help us. After that, Armand would come to me every week and ask, 'Did you sign Tony Williams yet?' And then, when we did sign a couple of real big names, people in the company said, 'Well, I don't know why we couldn't have done that three years ago!' Lanny and I would laugh, because we knew that it had taken eighteen months of working on their sticks to satisfy them.

"It's not just the sticks," John continues, "it's the relationship that you establish as well—along with the credibility of the company. We had

that as a cymbal maker, but a lot of drummers were waiting in the wings to see if we were going to see this thing through. They didn't want to jump on board if we were going to give up on making sticks three years down the road. But I think a lot of them saw that we were spending more money on advertising, coupled with improving the quality of the sticks. We were looking like a serious drumstick company."

As with brand-name recognition in the stores, wouldn't the already-established endorser roster for cymbals give Zildjian sticks a head start in that area? John replies, "We value our relationships with all of our endorsers, and we have cymbal relationships going way back. So if we have a cymbal endorser who has a strong

relationship with a competitive drumstick company, we back off. We don't put pressure on anybody. But over the years, things have turned around to a point where we don't have to approach as many people—they're coming to us now. Once we established our initial lineup of artists, and people saw that Tony Williams, J.R. Robinson, and drummers of that caliber were using our sticks, they started to take a serious look at them, too."

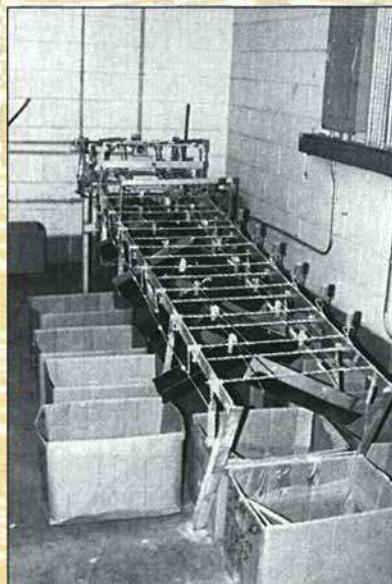
Having endorsers lends credibility to a drumstick brand, but a company can't make a living selling artist-model sticks. They do that with 5As, 5Bs, and 2Bs. Does Zildjian really feel that their endorser program is going to translate to consumer sales? "I think it already has," says John. "Over the two and a half years that we've had the *Artist Series*, that has definitely blossomed into a consumer awareness of our brand as a whole. Maybe a consumer tries our *William Calhoun* stick because William is his

or her favorite drummer. Even if that stick is too big, he or she will still be inclined to try another Zildjian model, rather than a stick from a totally different brand."

Lanny Marsh adds, "Our core sticks—7A, 5A, 5B, 2B, Rock—are unquestionably our best-selling sticks. And we've worked very hard to make sure that we have them in stock at all times. We have extremely high fill rates today, which was not always true. 5B wood tips are the most popular stick among all the brands—it's the one people sell the most of. If you're out of 5Bs, people will buy somebody else's—whether or not you have great endorser sticks. That's the customer-service part of the business: having the wood, making the product, and convincing the customers that if they buy a 5B in January, it's going to be there in March, too—and it will be the same stick. I believe that people understand that now—after we've been in business for six years—because they've gone



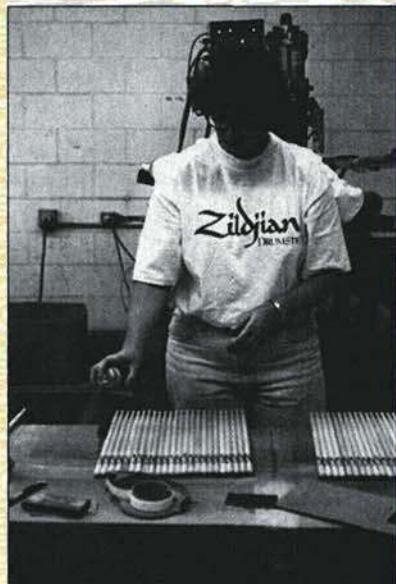
Drumsticks receive their lacquer finish in these tumbling machines



It may look old-fashioned, but this sorting machine matches sticks by weight with amazing accuracy.



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continued on page 119



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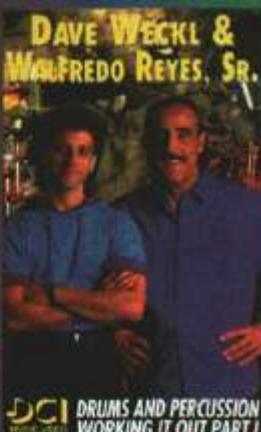
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PETER ERSKINE

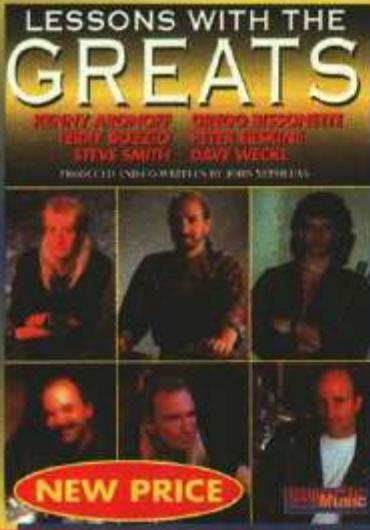
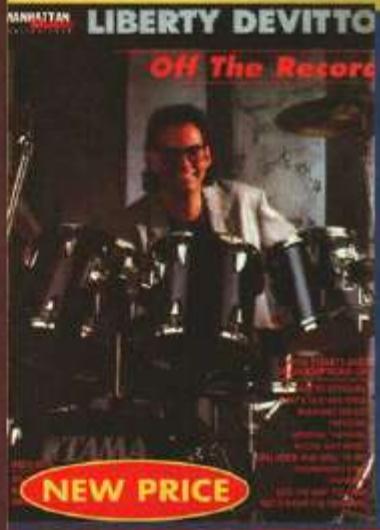
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Technical Report: Advanced Drum Shell Technology (an independent study).
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Remo Products

■ by Rick Van Horn

Surprisingly good drums, a nifty pedal, and surf sounds you can play.... Remo is a lot more than drumheads!

It's been quite a period of time since we reviewed anything from Remo. And in that period, the company has been extremely busy developing new or improved products. So we thought it would be a good idea to package a number of new Remo items into a single review to give you the most comprehensive information possible. We have three drumkits (*Triumph, MasterTouch, and Bravo*), a new bass drum pedal, and a unique percussion instrument to check out, so let's get started.

Drumkits In General

All of our test kits featured 10x12 and 11x13 rack toms, a 16x16 floor tom, a 16x22 bass drum, and a 6 1/2x14 snare. All were made of Remo's proprietary *Acousticon* material, which is described by the company as "a dense composite material made of genuine wood fibers and specially formulated resins." The *Triumph* and *MasterTouch* drums are made of *Acousticon 516*; the *Bravo* drums are made of *Acousticon 220*, which is essentially the same material, but thinner. All the kits were covered with Remo's *Quadura* covering material.

A word about *Acousticon* shells. Years ago, Remo introduced their *PTS* (*Pre-Tuned Series*) drums, which featured their original *Acousticon* shell material. These were extremely light, low-cost drums, aimed at an entry-level/hobbyist/weekender market. They served a purpose, but they were not professional-quality drums. When Remo first started marketing pro-level drums a few years later, the same shell technology was applied. As a result, the drumkits got a reputation for being flimsy. (The words "paper drums" were bandied about.)

Well, based on my experience with Remo's new, upgraded *Acousticon* shells, I'm here to tell you that these drums are *not* flimsy. In fact, they're heavier than many wood-shell drums I've played recently. The shells are dense, very rigid, and—according to Remo's literature—22% stronger than 6-ply maple (as per their comparative pressure tests). They also are said to absorb 33% to 50% less moisture than plywood. I didn't sub-

merge them in water to test that last claim, but I know that resin-impregnated materials are highly water-resistant, so I have no reason to doubt Remo's claim. In short, Remo's *Acousticon* seems as valid as any other alternative material for making drumshells, including fiberglass or metal.

Triumph And MasterTouch Kits

I've grouped these two kits together because they are more similar than they are different. The only differences between them are the lugs, the tom mounts, and the heads with which they are shipped. The drums themselves are identical, as are the bass drum spurs and the tom-arm and floor-tom leg receivers.

The *Triumph* kit (in black in our photo) features a special "load-dispersing" lug borrowed from drum-corps design. The tom mount on this kit features a hybrid of the Yamaha hex-rod-on-a-ball-and-socket and the Tama L-post. The L-shaped hex rod does operate on a ball-and-socket adjustment, so there's lots of positioning flexibility. In addition, the arms that mount the toms are themselves mounted in a casting that allows them to adjust up and down, and also forward and back. All of these adjustments made it very easy for me to find a comfortable set-up for the toms—as well as to make any "fine-tuning" adjustments right on the job.

The *MasterTouch* kit (in white in our photo) features standard lugs. The tom mount is identical to the *Triumph*'s except that the casting holding the tom arms is solid, and does not allow for forward-and-back movement.

That brings us to head selection. The *Triumph* kit is Remo's heavy-duty model, and so it's shipped with clear *Emperor* batter heads on the toms (with clear *Ambassadors* on the bottoms) and a *PowerStroke 3* batter head on the bass drum. The *MasterTouch* is fitted with more "traditional" *Pinstripe* batters on the toms and bass drum (with clear *Diplomats* on the bottoms of the toms) and comes with a Remo *Muffl* for additional control of the bass drum. Both bass drums feature *Ebony Ambassador* logo heads with no holes cut in them.

The snare drums for both kits are absolutely identical. They're covered in a chrome finish, fitted with *Legacy Ambassador* heads, and employ drop-out snare throw-offs and tension knobs at both ends of the snares.

With all this similarity, it's not surprising that the two kits offer very similar acoustic performance—allowing for the difference in heads. I played both, but I found that I preferred the *MasterTouch* for my particular Top-40 style of gig. I was really very impressed with the depth, resonance, and projection of the toms and bass drum. The dense, reflective shells and the resonant *Diplomat* bottom heads combined with the muffling properties of the *Pinstripe* batters to create a very solid, round, punchy sound. They sounded especially good when miked up, with little or no additional muffling.

When I played the drums on several gigs, I used the bass drum as it came: without a hole in the front head. The *Muffl*

against the batter head—along with a felt strip I put behind the front head—reduced the drum's ring to a point where it could be miked easily by a Shure SM91 PZM (Pressure-Zone Microphone) I placed on the floor directly in front of it. The bass drum sound still retained all the "bigness" of the drum—which was considerable.

Predictably, the *Triumph* kit, with its choice of heads, was a good deal less controlled, somewhat louder, and a lot "boomier" than the *MasterTouch*. This is neither good nor bad; it's just a matter of what's right for the application. In a big-room situation, or any other circumstance where a lot of resonance is necessary to cut through, the *Triumph* kit would be a good choice. The high-tension lugs allowed the heads to be torqued up to a high, cutting pitch, while the drumshells projected good, solid lows if the heads were tuned down. (I played around with quite a few tensions on both of the kits—for reasons I'll explain in a moment—so I had a chance to appreciate this particular quality of the drums.)

All in all, I was quite impressed with the toms and the bass drums on *both* kits. Unfortunately, I can't say the same of the snare drums. I have played—and enjoyed—Remo's piccolo snares in the past, so I had no predisposition to dislike these larger models. But something about the reflective nature of the shells, combined with the deeper shell depth, caused them to sound very one-dimensional: deep and throaty, with a noticeable "clanky" sound that was undeniably unpleasant. And no matter how I tuned the drums, I could not get even snare response. The response directly over the snares was good—albeit a bit buzzy. But as soon as I got off-center the slightest bit, the response dropped drastically. Added to this problem was a sympathetic buzz when I hit the 12" tom that no amount of tuning (of either the snare drum or the tom) could eliminate. I've been tuning drums for thirty years, and I've never come up against so stubborn a snare drum. I tend to think that all of the qualities of the *Acousticon* shell that allow it to create excellent tom and bass drum sounds work against it in the snare drum area. Added to this was the somewhat flimsy construction of the snare strainer. With its plastic tension knobs, pins-and-rivets throw-off mechanism, and overall



lightweight construction, it just doesn't seem of professional quality. On the whole, I think Remo really needs to re-examine the design of this particular drum.

Triumph and *MasterTouch* kits are sold without stands, in a move to reduce costs. (Optional professional-quality stands are available from Remo, but I didn't test any.) The *Triumph* kit tested lists for \$1,615; the *Master Touch* kit is priced at \$1,375.

The *Bravo* Kit

The *Bravo* is Remo's entry-level or light-duty kit. It features thinner shells and much lighter hardware appointments than its bigger siblings, and it comes either with or without stands and a bass drum pedal. (Ours came with them.) It's also fitted with Remo's *Dynamax* clear heads.

I found that the drums performed in a very similar manner to their heavier counterparts—as soon as I switched all the heads. I don't know how much the cost of this kit is reduced by virtue of its less-expensive heads, but it's a false economy. The *Dynamax* heads made the drums sound thin, high-pitched, and "boing-y." But when I put a set of *Pinstripes* on them, they produced a very respectable amount of punch and projection. In fact, there was a difference in their sound (versus the thicker-shelled Remo kits) similar to the difference between thin and thick wood-shell drums. Although Remo promotes the "low frequency output" of the *Acousticon* 516 shells, it's been my experience that thinner shells produce more depth, and I was pleased with the depth I achieved with the *Bravo* drums. (Carrying them around was a good deal easier, too.)



Now, certain aspects of the *Bravo* kit's lighter weight may not lend themselves to even semi-pro gigging. The spurs and floor tom legs are not heavy-duty, and the rack tom mount is of the old-fashioned knurled L-post type. It's functional, but it's not state-of-the-art, and it has positioning limitations. The stands that accompanied the kit are single-braced and light-duty by modern standards, and the hi-hat has the additional problem of having a very wide leg spread (offering the potential for difficulties in placement). But these are all cost-cutting measures, and appropriate for an entry-level kit. For those thinking of using it in a gigging situation, the option to buy the kit without hardware and use one's own has already been offered by Remo.

The *Bravo* snare drum features a coated *Dynamax* batter and a clear snare head, has the same snare throw-off described above (but no second tension knob), and sports the small *Bravo* lug design. I didn't have any better luck with this drum than with the other snares I tested. To be fair, however, I have to say that the overall performance of this snare was at least comparable to that of the metal snare drums on most entry-level kits.

The kit we tested, with stands and pedal, lists for \$1,147; without hardware the cost is \$847.

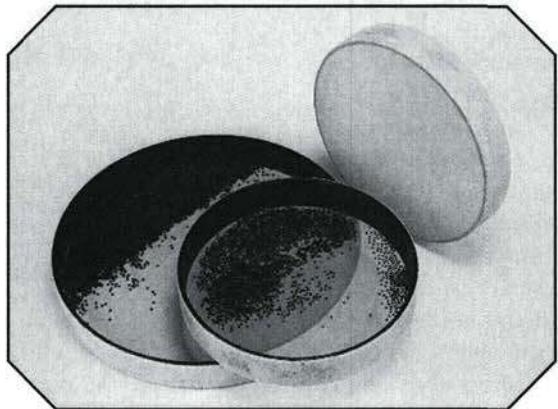
512 PowerStroke Pedal

Remo has always offered hardware to accompany their kits, but they've never really been a contender in the pro-pedal market. They are now. The chain-driven 512 *PowerStroke* pedal offers smooth operation, a host of adjustments for per-

sonal comfort and feel (including beater stroke angle and lockable spring tension), and excellent construction. Conveniences like a top-adjusted hoop clamp and a removable toe stop are also added. And Remo tops it all off with a unique beater that features a head with three surfaces. Each surface has a different angle (4°, 6°, and 8°) to accommodate the angle of a bass drum batter head created when the drummer tilts the bass drum—thus making sure that the beater still hits flat against the head and gives full contact.

The pedal plays smooth and fast, offers plenty of fine-tuning capabilities, and is built like a tank. The foot plate is a bit too big for my taste, but a lot of drummers don't have feet as dainty as mine. The 512 *PowerStroke* lists for \$180.

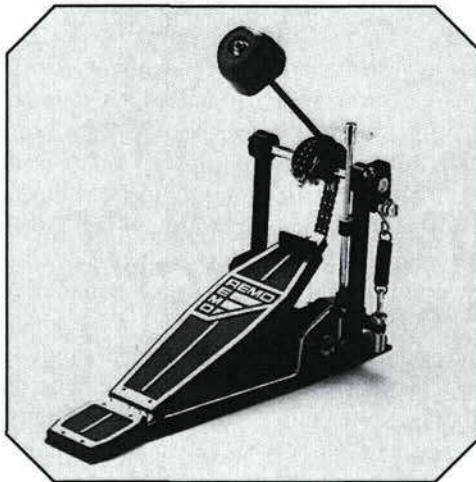
The Ocean Drum



Remo has been heavily involved in the "drum circle" movement, and has developed quite a selection of frame drums and other hand percussion instruments. So when we received their *Ocean Drum*—which is a frame drum with a *Legacy* batter head, a clear bottom head, and a handful of steel buckshot inside—we tended to think of it in that context. However, when I showed the drum to Adrienne Ostrander, who is an extremely active New York-area pro percussionist, she was very interested.

In fact, she took it on tour with her on a series of children's concerts. She also passed it along to a colleague, Jim Neglia, who worked with it in his percussion quartet. Both returned with rave reviews, citing the instrument's ability to recreate the noise of a rain forest, or to create other moods by tilting it about and moving the metal shot upon the heads. Jim mentioned that he also found use for the *Ocean Drum* as a frame drum and as a loud type of shaker. So for those of you looking for a little extra color in your percussion arsenal, consider the *Ocean Drum*. It's available in three sizes:

2 1/2x12 (\$45), 2 1/2x16 (\$60), and 2 1/2x22 (\$75).



Zildjian K Dark Thin Crash Cymbals

■ by Rick Mattingly

Like subtle shades and nuances from your cymbals? Zildjian's got 'em.

Given the popularity of Zildjian's *K Dark Crash* cymbals, it seemed odd that they were available only in one basic medium weight. Most A series crashes are made in five or six weights, from paper-thin through rock models. But Zildjian has now addressed that inequity by expanding its line of *K Dark Crashes* to include thin models in 14", 15", 16" 17", 18", 19", and 20" sizes and medium-thins in 16", 17", 18", and 19" sizes. Each model is available in regular or *Brilliant* finishes. We received fourteen assorted cymbals from the new line for review.

The first general characteristic of the new *Dark Thin Crashes* is that, because they are thinner than the original *Dark Crashes*, they have lower pitches. They also have a quicker response with a faster decay.

I found the *Dark Thins* to be especially effective in low-volume situations where I wanted to be able to lay into a crash fairly well, but didn't necessarily want it to obliterate the rest of the music. For example, in certain acoustic settings, an ordinary 16" *Dark Crash* might have the pitch you want, but be too loud. If you substitute a regular 14" *Dark Crash*, the volume might be better but the pitch might be higher than you desire. The new *Dark Thin Crashes* solve that problem. You can use a 14" or 15" *Dark Thin* and have a pitch similar to a regular 16", but it won't be as loud.

When you start getting into the larger sizes, the pitches on the thins are so low that you might lose a certain amount of cutting power. That could be one reason the company also offers 16", 17", 18", and 19" sizes as medium-thins, which have slightly

higher pitches. The slightly heavier weight also seems to go better with the larger diameters. To me, the 17" and 18" thins sounded a bit tinny compared to the smaller-diameter thins, whereas the 17" and 18" medium-thins were more in keeping with the character of the 14" to 16" thins. (We didn't receive 19" or 20" thins, so I can't comment on those.)

If you're looking for a couple of crashes, be careful about the pitches if you're mixing a thin with a medium-thin. If you're going with all thins, a two-inch difference will guarantee a nice contrast (14" and 16", 15" and 17", or 16" and 18"). But if you want to mix a small thin with a larger medium-thin, you might go for a three-inch difference (14" and 17", 15" and 18", or 16" and 19") to maintain a similar relationship. Ultimately, of course, you should use your ears, as you might happen upon a particularly high-pitched 16" thin and a low-pitched 17" medium-thin that are far enough apart for excellent contrast.

Of course, the *Dark Thins* could also be used to provide contrast with brighter crashes in the same size. For example, rock drummers with 17" and larger A crashes might want to add *Dark Thin* crashes in the same sizes. The pitch and "color" would be significantly different.

As mentioned above, each cymbal is available in regular or *Brilliant* finishes. Generally, the *Brilliant* cymbals had a narrower overtone range than their regular counterparts, but in some cases the sounds were extremely similar. I favored the *Brilliant* version in some sizes and the regular in others, while in a few I couldn't honestly say I favored one over the other. They were slightly different, but both of comparable quality. With most of the sizes, the *Brilliant* version had a slightly lower pitch, but that isn't necessarily a hard and fast rule. We received three 14" models—one *Brilliant* and two regulars—and the *Brilliant* fell in between the two regulars in terms of pitch.

Overall, the cymbals we received were remarkably consistent throughout the range of diameters, and anyone desiring more than one size would have no trouble coming up with cymbals that complemented each other nicely. I favored the medium-thins in the 17" and larger sizes, but the large thins could also be effective depending on the context. Drummers looking for a fast crash that speaks from within the band's sound (instead of *over* it) and that dies quickly will rejoice in these cymbals. Thanks go to Zildjian, for remembering those of us who value tone and response over volume and weight. The list prices for *K Dark Thin* and *Dark Medium Thin Crashes* in regular or *Brilliant* finish are as follows: 14" - \$198; 15" - \$218; 16" - \$238; 17" - \$261; 18" - \$281; 19" - \$304; 20" - \$324.



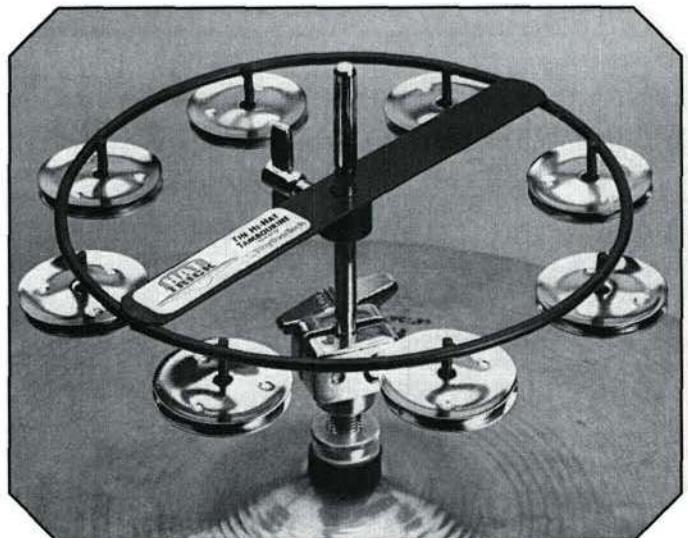
Rhythm Tech Hat Trick Hi-Hat Tambourine

■ by Adam Budofsky

Rhythm Tech's *Hat Trick* hi-hat tambourine is designed to clamp to hi-hat pull rods, thereby allowing drummers to activate a tambourine sound with their feet. Unlike the company's *DST* mountable tambourine, the *Hat Trick* is not meant to be struck with a stick, as the makers warn in the literature accompanying the instrument.

The *Hat Trick* is similar in design to LP's *Jingle Ring* (and both actually resemble the *Ching Ring*, which John Bonham popularized some twenty years ago). However, where LP's version features a "spoke" design, the *Hat Trick* employs one thin, flat metal piece that the hi-hat pull rod passes through (secured by a wing nut) and that is welded to the "ring" portion of the instrument at two opposite points. The *Hat Trick* also features an all-steel frame and black powder-coating.

Rhythm Tech claims that you can achieve two different



sounds from the *Hat Trick*, depending on whether it's mounted with its pins up or down: a more sustained ring sound (pins down), and a lighter, more controlled sound (pins up). Their claim proved to be accurate, with an audible difference between the two methods. Its light weight is also an advantage; no discernable hindrance to my hi-hat technique was apparent with the *Hat Trick* in place.

As stated earlier, the *Hat Trick* is not meant to be struck with a drumstick. My own sloppy technique proved the *Hat Trick's* fragile nature; at one point during a fourth set with my band, I noticed that the *Hat Trick* had broken at one of its weld points. Upon calling the makers regarding this, I was told that very few complaints of this type had been filed, but that the company makes it very clear that the *Hat Trick* is *not* meant to be struck; their *DST* mountable hi-hat is what you need for that sort of effect.

Still, I can't help but feel that, though the features that make the *Hat Trick* effective will obviously force it to be somewhat less rugged than the *DST*, the *Hat Trick's* design doesn't help the situation. Since the flat cross-piece is only welded to the top of the ring (pins-down position), any errant hits are bound to cause some dangerous stress. Attaching the cross-piece in a more secure manner—to both the top and bottom of the ring—would certainly reduce the chances of breakage.

All this doesn't take away from the *Hat Trick's* sound advantages. But you should be aware that with a mountable tambourine of this nature (and this doesn't just go for the *Hat Trick*), your hi-hat cymbal striking field is somewhat diminished—especially if you regularly use 13" or smaller hats—and you'll have to be especially careful in your technique. The *Hat Trick* lists for \$26.95.



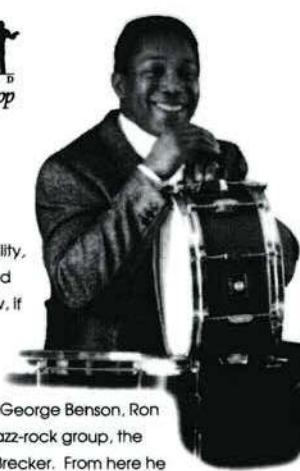
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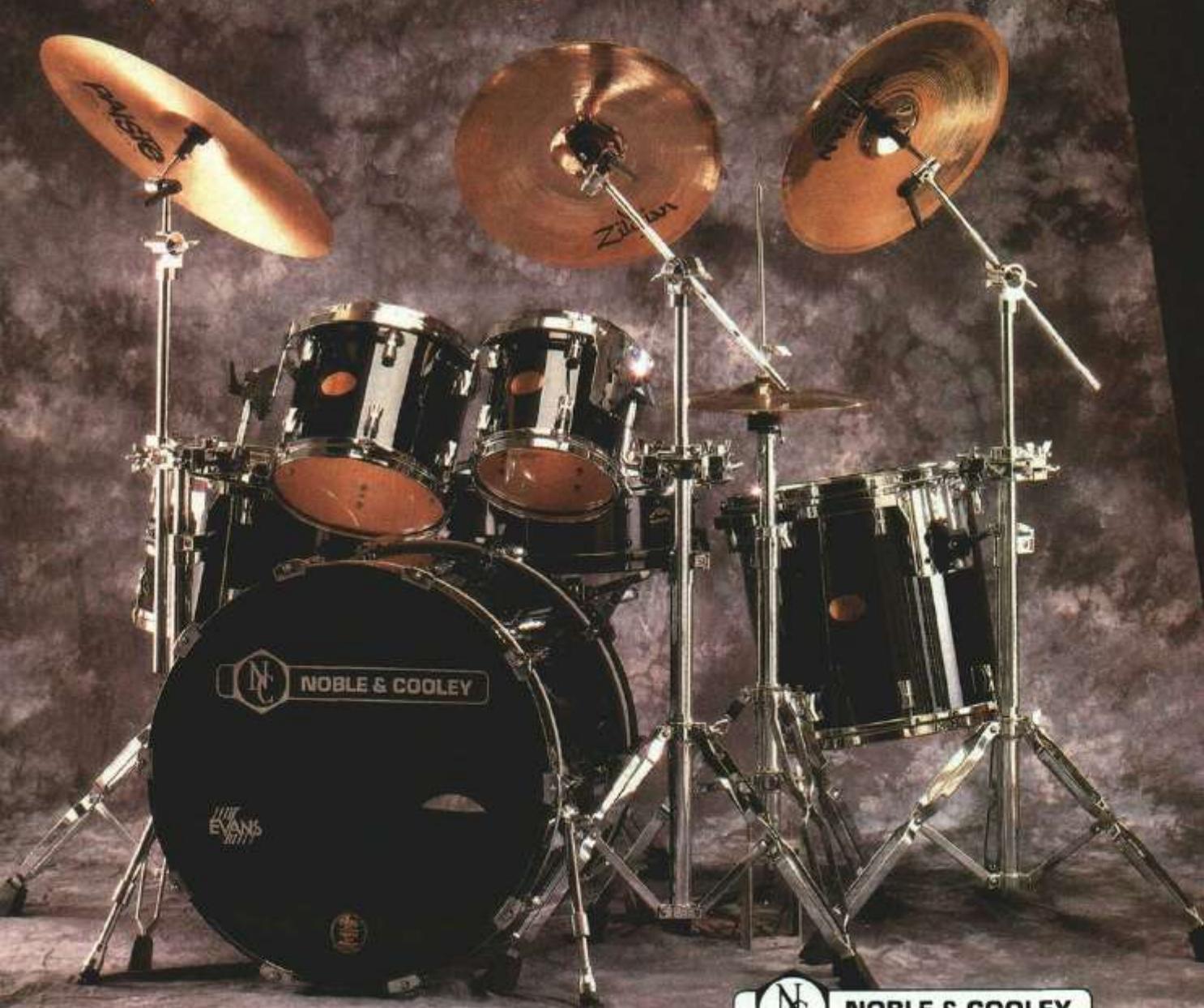
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ddrum AT Pad/Trigger Set

■ by Ed Uribe

At the top of the scale—quality and price-wise—the ddrumAT offers what may be the ultimate in integrated electronic pad or triggering kits.

Overview

The *ddrumAT* is a high-quality integrated sound source and trigger/pad-to-MIDI interface with eight inputs/channels and 16-voice polyphony. The sound library—both internal and external via the addition of cartridges called *Sound Pacs*—are dry samples of mostly acoustic-based drum and percussion sounds, along with some synthesized and processed sounds.

The unit comes with 64 kit-memory locations, and offers factory-programmed kits that can all be edited or rewritten and saved by the user. This kit memory can be expanded by the use of *Kit Pacs*. There are 64 internal samples of kicks, snares, toms, claps, synthesized sounds, and Latin percussion. *Sound Pacs*, *Kit Pacs*, and *Flash Pacs* (all to be discussed later) are placed in four cartridge slots in the front of the unit.

The *AT* is light and portable, and can easily be placed on top of something near your drum or pad set. Rack-mounting is an option, but there is a bit of a design problem here. The unit itself requires five spaces, but if you place it face-forward in a rack, the inputs face almost straight up. Consequently you have to use a larger rack in order to have clearance for the inputs. The ideal mounting would be at an angle in a mixer-style rack.

The beauty of the *AT* is its high-quality sounds and performance, coupled with its ease of use. Although it can be used by anyone, the ideal user would probably be someone who wants pro-level performance parameters and sounds, and who knows virtually nothing about MIDI or electronic percussion. (Of course, if you *do* know about those things, then you'll get even more out of the unit.) There are no windows to scroll through, and no hidden jobs. Every adjustment is made with buttons and knobs labeled in plain English, and the parameters or changes you make are all reflected clearly and simply on a three-digit display. The performance parameters basically have two controls to tweak (sensitivity and threshold) and three others that you set only once and don't tweak (AT Modes, Dynamic Curve, and Crosstalk). The samples are all edited with understandable terminology—like bass, treble, decay, pan, and pitch bend—rather

than the other madness often seen in the little two-inch windows of percussion synthesizers. So on to the details.

Trigger/Pad Performance Parameters

The *ddrumAT*'s triggering or pad parameters are dealt with quite easily. You plug a pad or trigger in—and play. If you use pads, you put the unit in *Pad Mode*. This provides an automatic input gain setting that you don't have to tweak. If you use triggers, you set one of the eighteen available curves for each trigger—based on the type of drum, head, and tuning you've placed the trigger on. The eighteen curves (called A1-6, B1-6, and C1-6) determine things like how long to wait before reading your trigger spike, how long to wait before triggering it again, how hard a hit it has to see before firing again, and several other things. The manual makes some recommendations on which ones to use for certain drums and tunings.

These settings apply to the same trigger input in all kits, so once you set them, that's it. Any further tweaking can be done as you play. You set your sensitivity levels with a knob that's like the volume knob on your stereo: For more gain, turn up the knob. A green light tells you there is a signal, and a red one tells you if you're peaking the input. Play with one hand and fine-tune with the other—pretty simple. If you are getting false triggering, then you can turn the threshold up a little.

As you play, the unit takes the parameters you've set and divides them into one thousand individual increments—into which your strokes are read and then converted to MIDI data. In extreme cases where on-stage volume levels could cause false triggering, there is a *crosstalk* setting that you can apply. Any further settings have to come in the form of correct trigger/pad placement to avoid false triggering and to achieve your musical end. The one down side to this whole thing is that these settings are either stored for all kits or not stored with the kits at all. You can't have individual performance parameters configured automatically at each kit change. Personally, I'd like to be able to save these parameters on a per-kit basis so I could have everything set up beforehand and not have to worry about this type of adjusting during performance.

Kit Setup And Performance Parameters

The *AT* has eight inputs, each of which can be assigned one sound. Doing this couldn't be easier. Hit the pad or trigger you wish to edit, push the button called "Sound," and scroll through all the sounds available with a rotary dial. Stop at the one you want and go on to the next source. When you're done, press "store." Voila! Instant drumkit. (You can, of course, edit the sounds, but more on this later.) Each channel-select button also functions as a trigger, so you can even set up kits without anything plugged into the inputs.

The *AT* also features a link mode in which you can link one or two "slave" channels to a given "master" channel. This gives you two or three notes at each linked output. How those notes are played by the master channel is determined by the setting of

one of seven link-mode settings available. These basically assign a curve to each of the notes, which can result in a layering, alternating, or crossfading of the notes—based on velocity. The performance parameters of each slave channel are still available for performance at its own output.

The snare drum trigger is a dual trigger that can have two separate sounds (such as snare and rim click or snare and rim shot) assigned and routed to an output with the stereo cable provided. The pre-programmed kits have settings of this sort on channels two and three to get you started.

All of this works very well. However, these features are really pretty commonplace in many controllers—as are many features *not* present in the AT. It seems to me that equipment at this quality and price level should have dedicated and fully editable alternating, crossfading, layering, linking, and shifting modes—based either on real-time performance parameters (such as velocity) or on preprogrammed settings—available to the user on a per-kit and per-channel basis.

Sound Editing Parameters

All of the sounds in the AT are fully editable, but you are not actually editing the sample. This is permanently stored in its original format. What you are editing is the *performance* of the sample at *that* channel in *that* particular kit. Once you assign a sound to a channel, you can then edit its pitch, bend, bend time, decay, bass, treble, and pan. When you are finished with the edits you store the kit, and your edits are saved along with all your other kit parameters. Any of the sounds can be assigned to any of the outputs simultaneously—and in any edited format. The two-tone generator-per-channel architecture prevents the canceling of one voice by striking the same sample at another location.

While all of the internal samples are first-rate, I still have two problems with this architecture and editing approach. First, the edits you make on the sound are stored as part of a kit, not as a new sound. Hence, you cannot copy that edited sound to another kit. If you want to



use that sound, you have to copy the whole kit to another location (which overwrites whatever's there) and then create another kit around that sound—or move to another kit, select the sound, and perform the identical edits again. If I take the time to edit a sound, it's because I intend to *use* it, so I'd like to be able to save it and use it whenever and wherever I want in the unit.

My second beef is that editing the performance of the samples results in a degraded sound quality. These types of edits are not edits to the sample, but instructions to play it back differently. If you raise the pitch, then you're telling the processor to play the sample back faster. Lower the pitch, and it plays it slower. So you're not really getting a lower or higher drum sound; you're getting the same drum sound played faster (higher) or slower (lower). This isn't really a problem with kicks and snares,

because tunings for those drums range from wide open to totally choked—and they are useful in all these tunings. Toms, on the other hand, can start to suffer. And percussion—both the orchestral and contemporary varieties—can *really* be a problem. Timbales, congas, bongos, etc. all need to be provided in a library with sampled versions of the various sounds these instruments truly make. On the orchestral side, imagine great samples of timpani sampled at D#51 and G#46—only your studio date requires F and C.

I'm down to brass tacks here, because studio work—or comparable professional live performances—is the market at which this unit is directed. I don't *expect* pro-level quality from a cheap rhythm box, but I do from \$3,000 to

\$5,000 units. In all fairness, the *AT* is not a sampler and it does have excellent sounds. The important point is that the editing on the unit should only be used for minor tweaks. The original sound library has to be complete enough to provide the variety of high-quality sounds the unit stands for.

Sound Library

As mentioned earlier, the internal sample library is first-rate—except for the lack of variety of Latin percussion sounds sampled in a broader spectrum. I also had a chance to check out five *Sound Pacs* cartridges from ddrum's sample library. I listened to a *Kicks and Snares* card, an *FX Drums* card, the *Peter Erskine Signature Series* card—this one is killin'!—and both *Orchestra Hits* and *Orchestral Percussion* cartridges—also excellent. The orchestral cartridges are all samples of the Swedish Philharmonic (!) made through an arrangement between ddrum and the orchestra. I also understand there is a world percussion card (which might make up for everything I said was lacking regarding that area of the library), but I didn't get to hear that.

Two other types of cartridges available are *Kit Pacs* and *Flash Pacs*. *Kit Pacs* expand your internal memory by allowing you to save your kits to cartridges with all the performance and sound parameters. (Sounds you use in these kits must be available in either the internal memory or on other cartridges or you'll get

no sound at that location.) *Flash Pacs* allow you to take your favorite sounds from any of the various cartridges and save them onto one cartridge so you can create collections of specific sounds you might need from various *Sound Pacs*. This is truly a great feature. It demonstrates ddrum's commitment to making their entire library of sounds as accessible as possible.

Triggers

If you've dealt with triggers at all, you know that most require head or shell mounting via some type of two-sided adhesive. Their 1/4 jacks usually need an additional adhesive or clamp of some sort. Furthermore, all triggers mounted on heads require that you tape them down for real security. (Of course, after you've completed this time-consuming process, when you change heads, you have to remove the trigger.) To make matters more difficult, many of the high-end head-mount triggers have a very fragile connection between the transducer and the cable. (I've separated several while removing them, and I've had friends tell me they do the same.)

Well, you won't have any of those problems with *these* babies. The *ddrumAT* triggers are housed in red metal casings that attach to the rims of your drums and tighten with a drum key—clean, effortless, and basically fail-safe. The casing positions the transducer tightly against the drumhead to eliminate any vibration.



Since the launch of the first eight CD releases in 1992, percussion great Zakir Hussain (*Shakti*, *Planet Drum**, *Making Music*) and Moment Records are still climbing the charts and breaking new ground in the fields of World Music and Indian classical music. *Downbeat* cites The Rhythm Experience album for "wonderful production" and calls the Tabla Duet (MR 1001) of Alla Rakha and Zakir "Nirvana for percussionists."

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tion. The worst you may have to do is loosen it and slide it to a slightly different position on your drum to get the optimum trigger placement for playing. You can even leave it where it is when you change drumheads. The connection is with an XLR-to-1/4"-type cable, which is provided with the trigger. The only problem here is that should you lose or break it, that cable is harder to replace than a regular 1/4"-to-1/4". I would definitely keep extras in a road case. The triggers track extremely well with the AT brain, and I got equally good results when I tried them with a couple of other trigger interfaces. If you already have a trigger interface and are looking for triggers, the ddrum triggers might be something to check out. Ddrum provides bass drum, dual snare (with stereo cable), and tom-type triggers. One final note: The triggers are cosmetically much more appealing than your standard shell- and head-mount triggers.

Pads

Ddrum's pads have been reviewed, mentioned by artists, and advertised pretty extensively in *MD* over the years, so I won't go into much descriptive detail. I do want to note that there is a dual-input snare pad available (which provides a trigger source from the head and from the rim and requires two cables), along with tom pads and bass drum pads. The pads are comfortable to play and track very well. An optional adaptor widens the bass

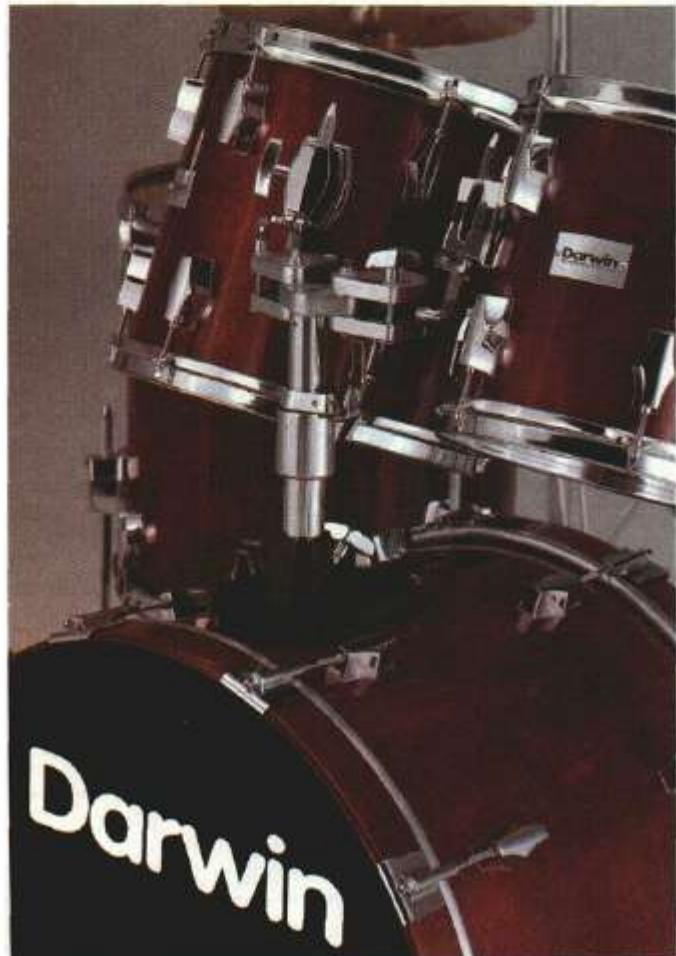
drum pad to accommodate double-pedal use.

MIDI

The MIDI implementation on the *ddrumAT* is fairly complete for the type of unit it is, but limited if viewed from the perspective of a master controller of an electronic percussion rig. It allows you to set all the standard note number and channel parameters on either a global or per-kit basis. You can send gate time in a limited way, but that's it for performance parameters—no real-time controllers except for non-programmable aftertouch. You can turn local on and off to switch between playing the internal sounds with the unit as a controller or just using the unit as a tone generator. It sends and receives program change messages and recognizes and transmits System Exclusive messages.

Conclusions

The *ddrumAT* is outstanding as an integrated high-level sample playback unit, trigger/pad-to-MIDI interface, and limited controller. The kit combinations with either the triggers or the pads are great. It's fun to set up a system and play with so little effort. With integrated units, though, you tend to forfeit a little of what you'd get from separate components purchased individually. For the price of this unit you could get a high-quality pro-



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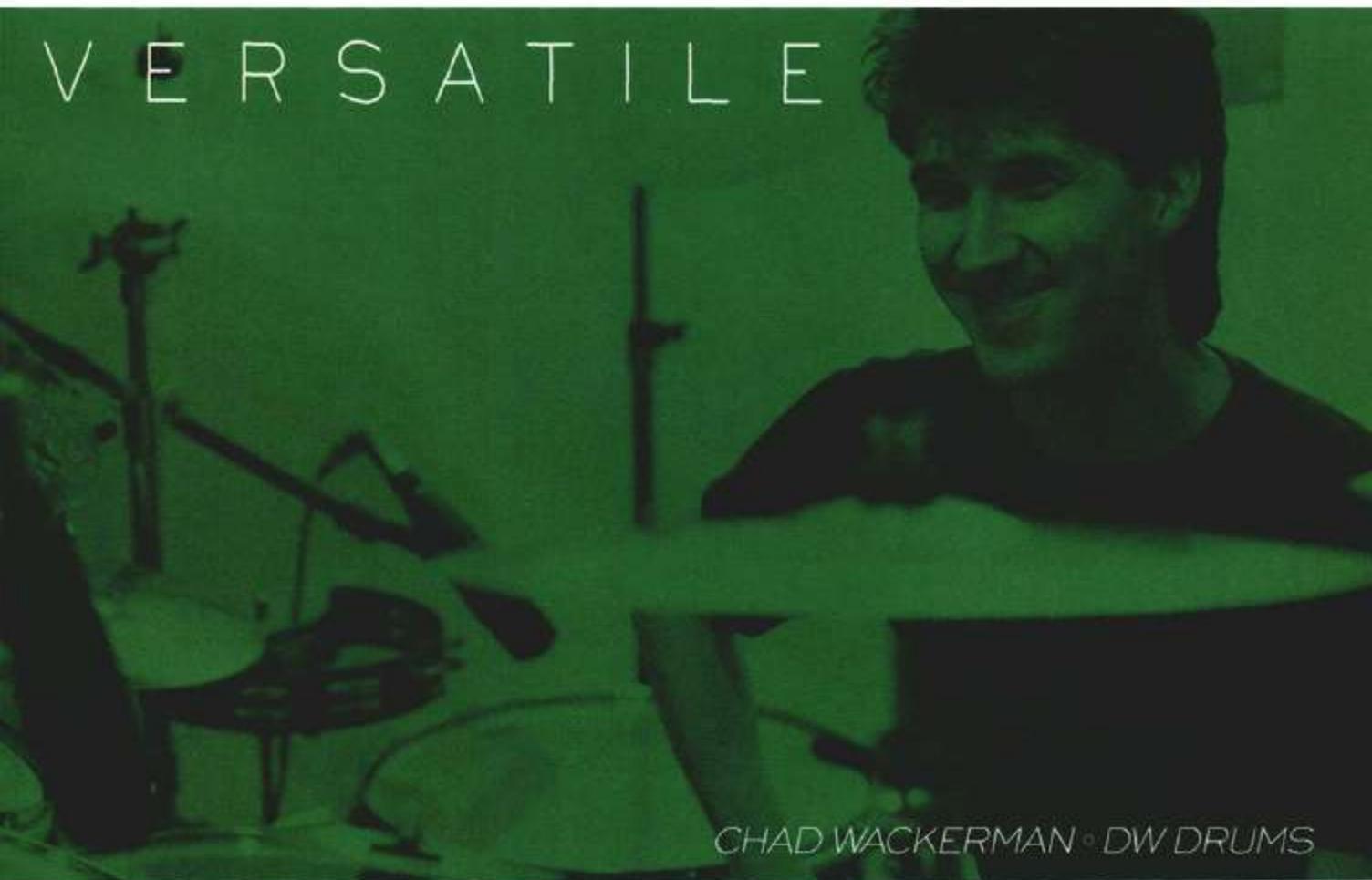
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Abel Practice/Triggerable Cymbals



Abel's new *S.T. Series* cymbals give drummers the opportunity to practice with the same feeling and action as metal cymbals, but without the loud sound, say the makers. *S.T.* cymbals can also be used for electronic triggering. The cymbals are made from *polypropylene*, come in black or white, and are available in four sizes (10" splash, 14" hi-hat/crash, 16" crash, and 18" crash/ride). **Abel Industries, P.O. Box 1724, Camarillo, CA 93011-1724, tel: (805) 987-8124, fax: (805) 484-0701.**

New From Ludwig



Rocker Ltd. kit

Ludwig has recently released several new items, including enhancements to their *Classic* and *Super Classic* kits. Bass drums now come standard with *Rocker* (kick style) spurs as well as a 9" port hole in the front head. The kits are also available in two new colors—emerald shadow and cherry stain (both of

which allow the natural wood grain to show through)—and are fitted with Ludwig's new *Power Collar* batter heads, which are made of clear *Mylar* with an adhesive-backed black collar. The heads are available in 6" to 26" sizes and are said by the company to create a deep, powerful, full-bodied sound with fewer overtones.

On the entry-level side, Ludwig has introduced its *Rocker Ltd.* series, with a list price under \$1,000. The five-piece kit includes a 16x22 bass drum with tubular-style double tom holders and *Rocker-style* spurs, 10x12 and 11x13 toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 6 1/2x14 metal/chrome snare drum. Hardware is dou-



Acrolite snare drum

ble-braced. In addition, Ludwig's *Acrolite* student snare drum is now available with a black galaxy finish. **Ludwig, P.O. Box 310, Elkhart, IN 46515-0310, (219) 522-1675.**

New Budget-Minded Paiste Lines

Paiste has introduced two new lines aimed at drummers on restricted budgets. *Bronze 502* cymbals are made from the SnBzS bronze alloy (which Paiste's 2002 and 3000 lines are also made from) and are available in 20" ride, 16" crash, 16" power crash, and 14" hi-hat models. Targeted at beginning drummers, the *Paiste 302* line is made from the MS63 brass alloy and features 20" ride, 16" crash, and 14" hi-hat models. Paiste claims that both these lines provide the superior sound qualities normally associated with higher-priced cymbal lines. **Paiste America, Inc., 460 Atlas St., Brea, CA 92621, (800) 4PAISTE .**

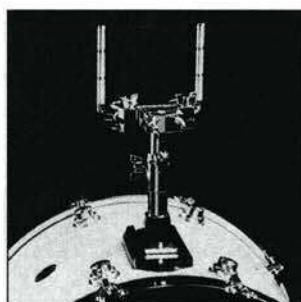
Slingerland Artist Classic Kits

Slingerland has introduced its *Artist Classic* series of drumkits, featuring the white marine pearl and black diamond pearl finishes the company helped make popular in the '60s. According to Slingerland, the coverings are the original patterns from past decades. Available drum sizes are: 8x10, 8x12, 9x13, 10x14, and 12x15 toms; floor toms between 14x14 and 16x18; and 14x18, 14x20, 14x22, 14x24, and 14x26 bass drums. Shells are constructed using an inner and outer ply of North American maple and a 3-ply core of mahogany, and are cross-laminated for extra strength. Traditional Slingerland lugs are also featured on the kits, as well as Stick-Saver hoops. **HSS, Inc., P.O. Box 9167, Richmond, VA 23227.**

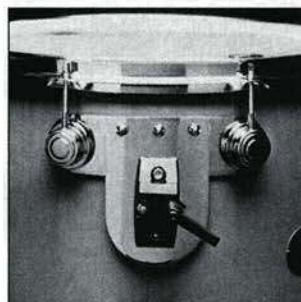
Cymbal Caps

Cymbal Caps are individual cymbal covers designed to seal out dust, smoke, and fingerprints, protect against scratching, and promote easier handling. *Cymbal Caps* are made in America with heavy-gauge vinyl outside and soft cloth inside, and come in 14", 16", 18", and 22" sizes. **PO.Box2594,BattleCreek, Michigan49016-2594,(616)866-5069.**

DW Non-Invasive Hardware



Drum Workshop's new "non-invasive" bass-drum-mounted tom holders feature a non-penetrating tom holder and a sliding track for added forward-and-back positioning flexibility. The system comes in single-tom, double-tom, and single-tom/single-cymbal versions.



DW's suspension-type mounts use existing screws on DW drums to suspend toms. They are recommended and available as a factory-installed option on all DW toms. **DrumWorkshop, 101 Bernoulli Circle, Oxnard, CA93030.**

Foreign Language Drum Videos

Instructional drum videos produced in Mexico and Germany are currently available. The Mexican video, *Fundamentos De Bateria*, features drummer Mike Portillo covering a variety of playing styles. It can be ordered from **Corporacio Digital, Popo8a, Col. Florida San Angel, Mexico D.F. cp.01030.** The German video, *Manni von Bohr, Drum—Praxis*, features noted German drummer von Bohr in a tutorial that covers technique, posture, double bass work, and soloing. It can be ordered from **Basement Music Production, Tiergartenstr. 158, 3000 Hanover 71, Germany.**

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Colorlife is now offering complete chrome and polishing services. All chrome is triple-plated with a guaranteed turnaround of two weeks or less. **Colorlife Corp., 13 Engineer Dr., Hicksville, NY 11801, tel: (516) 433-1222, fax: (516) 433-1221.**

Afro-Caribbean Rhythms Book Now Available Through Belwin

Chuck Silverman's *Practical Applications Using Afro-Caribbean Rhythms* book is now being distributed by CPP Belwin. *Practical Applications* contains exercises relating to those discussed on the DCI video of the same name. **CPP Belwin, 15800 N.W. 48th Ave., Miami, FL 33014, (305) 620-1500.**

Beyerdynamic Drummers' Mic's

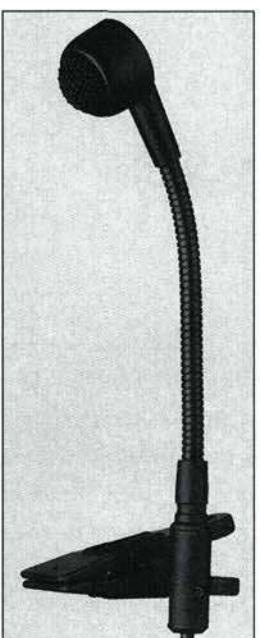


Beyerdynamic has introduced two new types of microphones for drummers, the *HEM 190* and *HEM 191* head-worn vocal mic's, and the *M 54* drum mic'. The *HEM 190* is a cardioid mic', and the *HEM 191* is an omnidirectional mic'; both are gooseneck-mounted miniature electret condenser-types. Beyer claims that the goosenecks are very thin and flexible, making the mic's particularly easy to

push out of the way and pull back again. Both mic's can be supplied with or without headbands, and feature frequency ranges between 20Hz and 20kHz. Phantom power of 8 to 52 volts is required, and output is via a three-pin XLR connector.

Beyer's *M 54* is a gooseneck-mounted miniature hypercardioid dynamic mic' featuring a direct-mounting system that the makers claim acts as a vibratory transducer.

Beyer states that the mic' gives rimshots a "sonic reality seldom heard before." The *M 54* does not require phantom power or a battery, frequency range is between 40Hz and 12kHz, and connection is via a three-pin XLR. **Beyerdynamic, 56 Central Ave., Farmingdale, NY 11735, tel: (516) 293-3200, fax: (516) 293-3288.**



READERS' PLATFORM

continued from page 6

welcomes any and all information about women drummers who might deserve coverage. (If you believe you are a likely candidate, by all means please send us a bio.) In addition, two of our top interviewers (Robyn Flans and Teri Saccone) and two of our most often-featured photographers (Ebet Roberts and Lissa Wales) are women. All four of these women have strong ties to the music industry, and often bring potential coverage candidates to our attention. Yet even with this "woman's perspective" on the business, they rarely mention women drummers to us—simply because they rarely come in contact with women drummers who meet the criteria for coverage. However, as more and more women become active figures in drumming, you may be sure that more and more women will be included in the pages of Modern Drummer.

WOMEN IN MODERN DRUMMER

(Does not include Ask A Pro items, Critique reviews, or minor Update items. Does include Update items that were significant profiles.)

Name	Type of Article	Issue Date
BORDEN, Barbara	F	July 1982
BRANDY, Carolyn	F	July 1982
BURKLY, Kathy	UC	Aug 1986
CARRINGTON, Terri Lyne	F	Oct 1977
CARRINGTON, Terri Lyne	F	May 1983
CARRINGTON, Terri Lyne	F	Sep 1989 (cover)

GRAIN, Roberta	F	Feb/Mar 1980
DODGION, Dottie	P	Sep 1983
DUFORT, Denise	UC	Nov 1984
E. (Escovedo) Sheila	F	Dec 1982
E. (Escovedo) Sheila	F	July 1991 (cover)
ELMER-KING, Suzanne	P	Feb 1989
EVANS, Sue	F	July 1981
FRASER, Denise	UC	July 1989
FREED, Biddie	OM	Oct 1986
GLENNIE, Evelyn	P	May 1989
HADJOPOULOS, Sue	UC	Apr 1983
HARRIS, Elaine	U	May 1992
KIMOTO, Kumiko	F	Apr 1988
("Downtown Dozen")		
KNOLES, Amy	P	Oct 1989
MERJAN, Barbara	P	Oct 1988
O'LOONEY, Katie	F	Apr 1988
("Downtown Dozen")		
PETEANI, Joan	OM	Nov 1984
PETERSON, Debbie	F	Oct 1986
PETRUCCI, Roxy	F	Mar 1991
PROUT, Nancy Given	U	Feb 1991
SCHOCK, Gina	UC	Apr 1982
SPIRO, Paula	TF	Dec 1985
F = Major Feature Interview		
P = Portraits		
U = Update		

UC = Up & Coming
OM = On The Move
TF = Teachers' Forum



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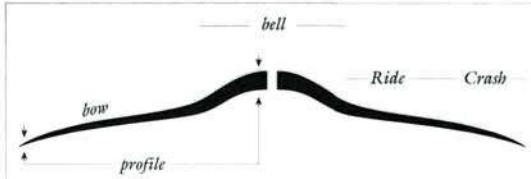
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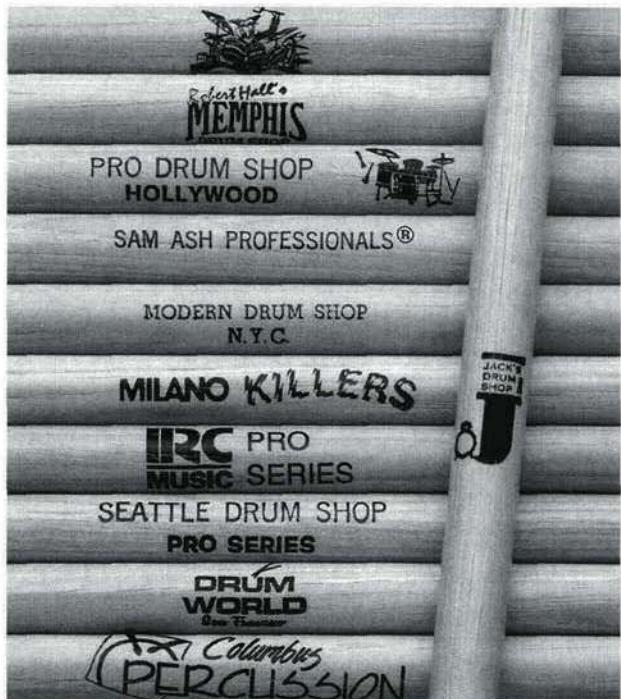
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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

continued from page 16

Any information would be welcome.

Richie Mola
Bronx NY

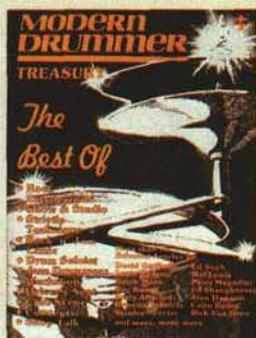
A We checked with William F. Ludwig, Jr., who replies, "Your single-tension bass drum was probably manufactured between 1926—the year the first pearl finishes appeared on Ludwig drums—and 1941. The number 4208 inside the shell was an inventory number, and I'm afraid those records are long gone. From your description, the drum appears to have been refinished. It could have been either part of a big band set or a marching drum, since the 14x26 size was noted for its volume and so was popular in either application. But since it had a pink sparkle original finish, I'd guess it was a drumset drum."



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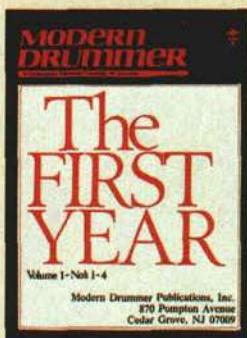
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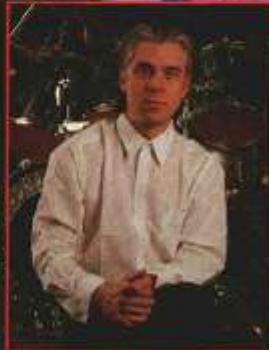
...doesn't really exist.

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Odd-Meter Patterns For Brushes: Part 1

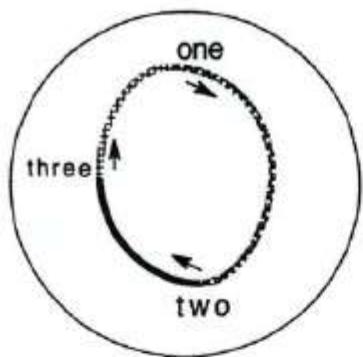
■ by Clayton Cameron



Since I produced the *Living An OfBrushes* video, drummers have asked me about playing brushes in odd meters. I'm very pleased to hear such interest, so I've written and illustrated some basic patterns for brushes in different odd meters. We'll start by focusing on 3/4 meter.

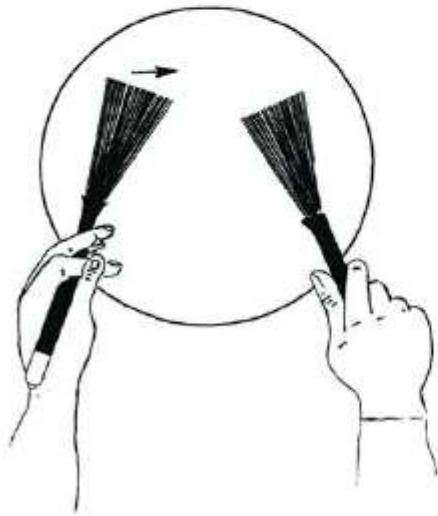
As I tell my students, it's important to get a smooth sound in your left hand *before* adding the right. In the following diagram, the clock-wise circle is to be played with your left hand. This circle is divided into three shaded areas, with each area equaling one quarter note. Counting the quarter notes, *sweep in one continuous motion* through each area. Practice this pattern before moving on.

Diagram 1



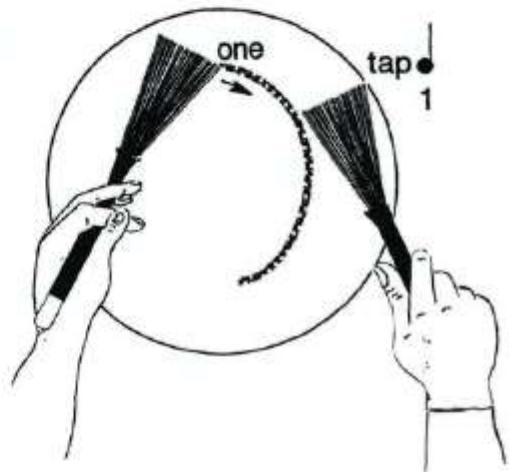
This is the starting position for the 3/4 pattern:

Diagram 2



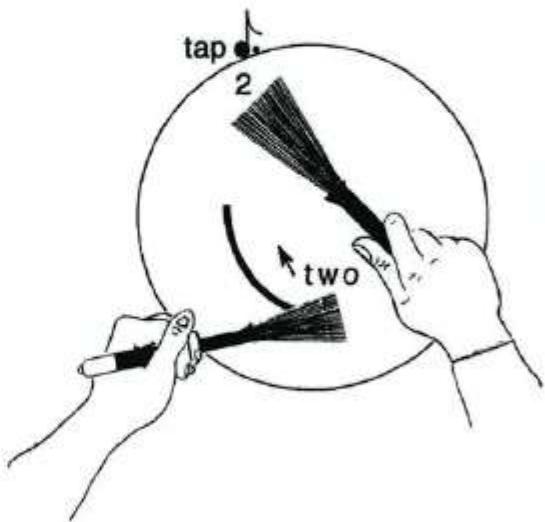
On the right side of the drum, the right hand taps beat 1, then lifts off the drum. The left hand *simultaneously* sweeps the first quarter note of the circle.

Diagram 3



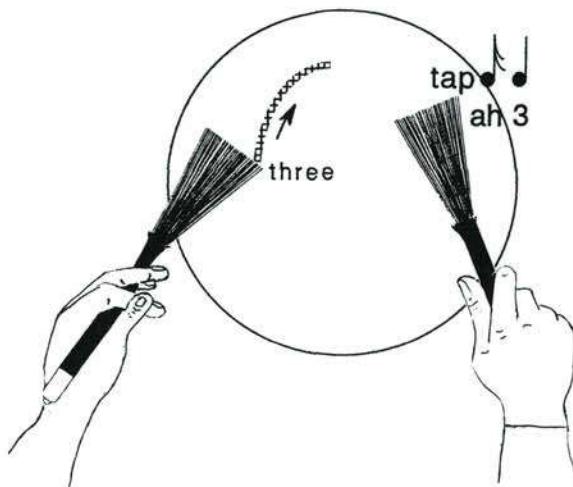
Next, the right hand crosses over to the left side of the drum, taps beat 2, and then lifts off the drum. The left hand *simultaneously* sweeps the second quarter note of the circle.

Diagram 4

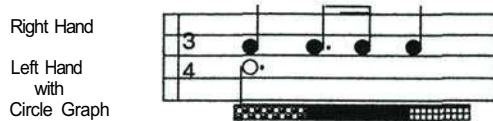


The right hand, crossing back to the right side of the drum, taps the "ah" of beat 2 and beat 3. The left hand *simultaneously* sweeps the third quarter note of the circle.

Diagram 5



Continue the pattern by starting over again with Diagram 3. Notated, the hand pattern looks like the following. (The circle graph represents the movement of the left hand in Diagram 1.)



In the next article we'll check out some patterns in 5/4. See you then!

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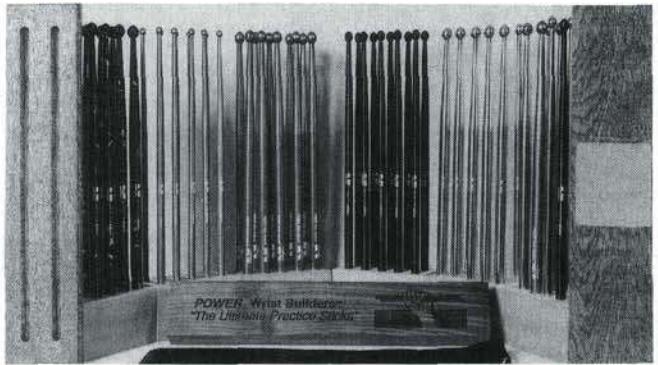
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CHARLIE BENANTE

continued from page 25

they do with two separate drums. I've been playing the double kit so long, and that's what I'm used to. But it's always nice to go over to a smaller kit. You just play differently.

TS: Getting back to recording, do you have the luxury of experimenting with parts when you enter the studio?

CB: I actually don't like taking a lot of time in the studio. I go in there and just play. If I feel like playing, I'm gonna just play. I don't like going in one day and doing eight takes of a song. I don't believe in that. That's not the way I play. If I'm gonna play, I'm gonna play the song straight through, and just keep it as spontaneous as possible. I don't want to punch in—none of that stuff.

TS: How long do you take to lay down your tracks?

CB: I usually do them in three days, four at the most. For this album, it took about three days.

TS: How close to a live setting is it in the studio?

CB: I go in with Scott and Frankie [Bello, bass] and we just go for it. The most important thing is to get the drums down, and if those two like what they played on the track, they leave it. If not, they just do a scratch track and erase it later. I like that atmosphere of playing live with them.

The worst part about playing in the studio for me is the headphones. For the last album, as well as this one, we recorded at A&M Studios, and I used these headphones that were actually constructed for shooting ranges—those cans that totally cover your ears. They make your drums sound amazing. The engineers installed two speakers inside them so I could hear the click, just a little bit of the kicks, and my toms. That's all I need. I played fine with that. I don't normally like headphones because it's loud in the studio and if you hit the kick really hard it sometimes distorts in your ear.

TS: You are involved in producing the albums. Do you stick around while everyone lays down their respective parts?

CB: I get out of there for a while. It's like painting a picture: I lay down the primer, then each person comes in and adds

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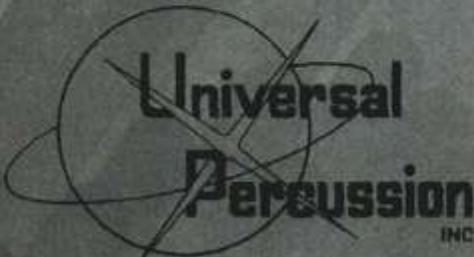


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their own colors. When we have everything down, that's when I like to come back in.

TS: Is it tricky to strike a balance between guitars and drums in a band like Anthrax, which is so driven by both elements?

CB: Sometimes it's extremely difficult, because everybody wants to be heard. I always try to think of what's best for the song. Everything should have a nice blend. We do have arguments, but we've been through this before, so getting it right is not too much of a problem.

TS: Does being a guitarist shed a different light on your drumming?

CB: Definitely. I don't have to hear anybody playing because I have the songs in my head—I sing them in my head as I'm playing.

TS: Is the studio a second home to you?

CB: Yeah, I do like being in the studio more than touring. Frankly, I hate being on the road. I should say that *sometimes* I like it, but mostly not. You really can't be yourself on the road. When we're touring, I'm just "Charlie from Anthrax." That's how I'm viewed when I'm on the road, which is a big problem for me. I was myself before I was in this band, and I have a life outside of it. Believe me, I love this band and I love creating music, but it's just one part of me. Plus, when I'm on the road I can't really do anything outside of the show. My day consists of getting up, going down to breakfast with everybody, or just staying in the room most of the day. Then at 4:30 we go to the gig and hang out with the crew guys, which is fun, since most of them are my friends. Then it's time to do the gig. Playing live can be great, but it's very hard work out there, playing the stuff that we do. Also, being away from your girlfriend, your wife—whoever—can be hard.

There were so many times when I had to play with a 102° fever, and let me tell you, that is the worst feeling in the world: when your arms are just hanging down and you have to move them for at least an hour and a half. You have no choice.

TS: At what point do you decide that you might be too sick to do it?

CB: If anyone of us is so sick that we can't get out of bed, then we cancel. If

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Favorite recordings

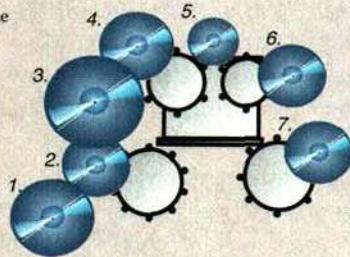
Nick has played on:

"This Way Up"
Bronte Brothers
"East West"
The Fat Lady Sings

Favorite Tours:

Bill Withers

Tanita Tikaram



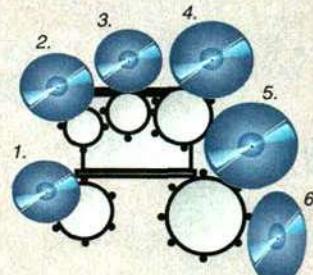
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"Yellow Christian"
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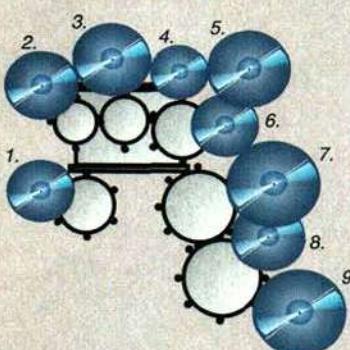


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- 5) 18" 2002 Crash
- 6) 14" 2002 Sound Edge Hi-Hat
- 7) 20" 2002 Power Ride
- 8) 16" 2000 Crash
- 9) 20" 2002 Novo China



Favorite recordings

Peter has played on:

"The Price You Pay"
Spear Of Destiny
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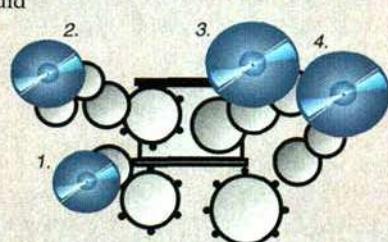
Favorite recordings

Bill has played on:

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King Crimson
"One Of A Kind"
Bill Bruford
"All Heaven Broke Loose"
Bill Bruford's Earthworks

Cymbal Set-Up:

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- 2) 16" Paiste Line Fast Crash
- 3) 20" Paiste Line Dry Heavy Ride
- 4) 20" Paiste Line Flat Ride

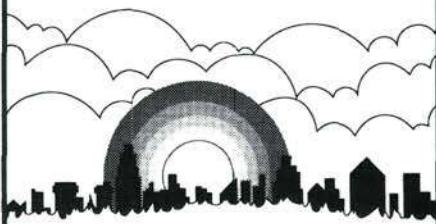


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one of the guitar players is sick, they can cover for each other, but I can't fake it. I sort of drive the band, so I can't fake it. We only had to cancel a show once, and that was in Germany. I was so sick I couldn't even pick up the remote for the TV

There are times on the road when I don't want to even see the drums. I'm a big *Simpsons* fan, as a lot of us in the band are, and if I can't watch it, sometimes I'll get pissed off. If I can't tape it, I'll be bummed out and I'll wish I was home, where I can just watch it and be myself. I understand that people will think that I should feel lucky to have this job. I do, but like everybody else I have days when I just want to be home in my own house, and the last place I want to be is somewhere in the middle of Europe or wherever we might be.

Some nights I don't want to pick up my sticks at all. But you go out and you do it. But when I don't want to play, I'm hopeful that something will change my attitude during the set, and most of the time something does happen. When I see people out in the first row really getting into it—which is usually as far as I

can see—then I play better. I know a lot of people who read this will identify with the fact that management sometimes gives the seats up front to record company people. I don't believe in that. That seat should be reserved for a fan. I don't want to see a guy in a suit; I want to see a kid in a T-shirt getting into it.

TS: How do you normally prepare for a show?

CB: I have to warm up before I play. Most of the time we'll have a little jam backstage. If I get out there and I'm cold, I just can't function.

Usually when we get to a gig we eat dinner. Everybody likes to eat about an hour or two before the show because it gives us energy. Then if we have a long break before we go out, we sometimes have to do interviews, which I hate. If I want to do an interview, it's at a time where my head is there, not before I'm about to go out and play. It's distracting. Every day there's something—visiting radio stations, doing interviews, making in-store appearances.... I actually like in-stores because you get to meet the fans face to face, which is great. But after three hours, even that can be draining,

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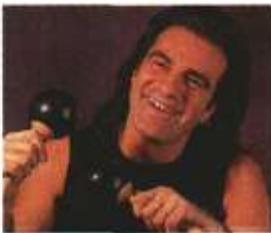
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especially before having to play a show. There are a lot of details every day, all day long. So touring is not just about playing every night. The demands are constant.

TS: Speaking of demands, would you say that you are a demanding person to work with?

CB: Sometimes I guess I can be. I nitpick, but it's because I want the best for the band. I don't like to get on anybody's case, but if it's best for the song, I try to let people know. To be honest, I've been told that I should throw my weight around more in the band, but I don't want to do that. I don't want to become the Gestapo—it's just not me. I try to express myself honestly without being pushy.

TS: Do you think that losing your father at an early age had an effect on your going after goals so determinedly?

CB: I wasn't really aware of my father's death when it happened because I was so young—it didn't even register. My mother and my sisters pretty much raised me, and I was lucky enough to have brothers-in-law around, too. But when I was growing up I wasn't goal-oriented at all because I didn't really care about much

of anything. The things I did care about were my music and my instruments. If it wasn't for that and for the art stuff I was into, I don't know what I'd be doing now. I screwed up the whole school thing.

TS: Can you elaborate?

CB: I hated school and I just didn't want to be there, and I didn't want to participate. I just wanted to play music. I was pretty rebellious. I would get up in the morning and make it look like I was going to school, but I wouldn't go. So I played that out for a while, and then one day I woke up and everything changed.

TS: What was the turning point?

CB: I guess the turning point was realizing that if you want to do something with your life, you have to play by the rules to a certain extent. If you don't go along with certain things, it's gonna hurt you. No matter what you *want* to do, you have to have some level of education, because the minute you start speaking to people about any type of job, they can tell if you're a moron. You need to have an education to do even the simplest things. There's also a lot of people out there who can read but don't bother to pick up a book. Reading is really important. I always try to make the time to read.

TS: What spurred your interest in music in the first place?

CB: As far as I can remember, all I did was play the drums. I didn't start to play the drums—I *was* the drums. It was something that God gave me. People thought of me as a drummer since I was two or three years old. Then it got to the point where I couldn't express all my music on the drums, so I got a guitar when I was about thirteen. I taught myself how to play the same way I taught myself on the drums—by watching and listening to people.

TS: Do you think that being raised by women gave you a different perspective on the opposite sex?

CB: Yes, because I've always respected women very much. There are guys who are in this business just to get girls, just as there are some girls who are into it for the guys. That's one thing that's screwed up about being in a band: Some people aren't in it for the music, but for some stupid reason like that. They go on the road and it's one big party for them. I never approached it like that. People might get the wrong idea about us—that on the road we go to church every Sunday. It's not like that, but we're not in it



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Drugs is another issue that gets me pissed-off. There are a lot of bands that are using drugs, and all of a sudden it's become glamorous again—that's fucked up. Younger bands should be aware that glamorizing drug use is wrong. It's just not responsible. A lot of the things that are associated with "rock 'n' roll" I could do without.

TS: Let's talk about another project you've been involved with, S.O.D. How did that come about?

CB: We were up in New York recording our second album, *Spreading The Disease*. We wrote these songs and we asked Billy Milano and Danny Lilker to be on the album. We recorded the album in three days, released it, and people who were into Anthrax seemed to like it. I was asked at the time if I was going to leave Anthrax to do S.O.D., and of course I said "No." Anthrax is my first priority—I put my blood into it and I couldn't just leave it. S.O.D. was just a fun thing, a release to play with different people. There was no pressure with that.

TS: If you could work with any other people, who would it be?

CB: I'd love to be the first drummer to play with Depeche Mode live. That's what I'd really like to do, although I think their programming is great. I'd also like to play with the Beastie Boys. I would love to have played with U.K. Terry Bozzio was phenomenal in that band.

TS: In hindsight, what would you have changed about your career if you had the opportunity?

CB: I would have cut my hair earlier, [laughs]

TS: Seriously.

CB: Really, I just never liked it. People always said, "Rock 'n' roll is long hair," but I never liked it and it never fit me. But you do things when you're younger.... Now I look back at pictures of myself and think, "I looked like a jerk." It's that way with songs, too. There are songs that we did that I just hate.

TS: Would there be anything you would change about your drumming?

CB: I'll tell you about something that I did that made me a better player. In '88 I gave a lot of thought to the way I set up my drums. I moved my setup around. Before that I had two toms in the front

and two higher ones up on the left. I don't even know why I had it like that, because I didn't like it. I was restricted in what I could do because I just didn't feel comfortable reaching up to the left and then coming down. I realized this when I was in the middle of a tour and I couldn't find the time to change it around. Before we went out again, I changed it and it made a world of difference. It's funny

how important something as simple as that can be to your playing.

TS: How has it affected your playing?

CB: It's affected my rolls. I lowered the kit to where I felt I could hit the drums without having to reach for them.

TS: Do you sit differently now?

CB: Not really, because I've always sat as low as possible. It's just that now I don't have to reach as much, and it's so much

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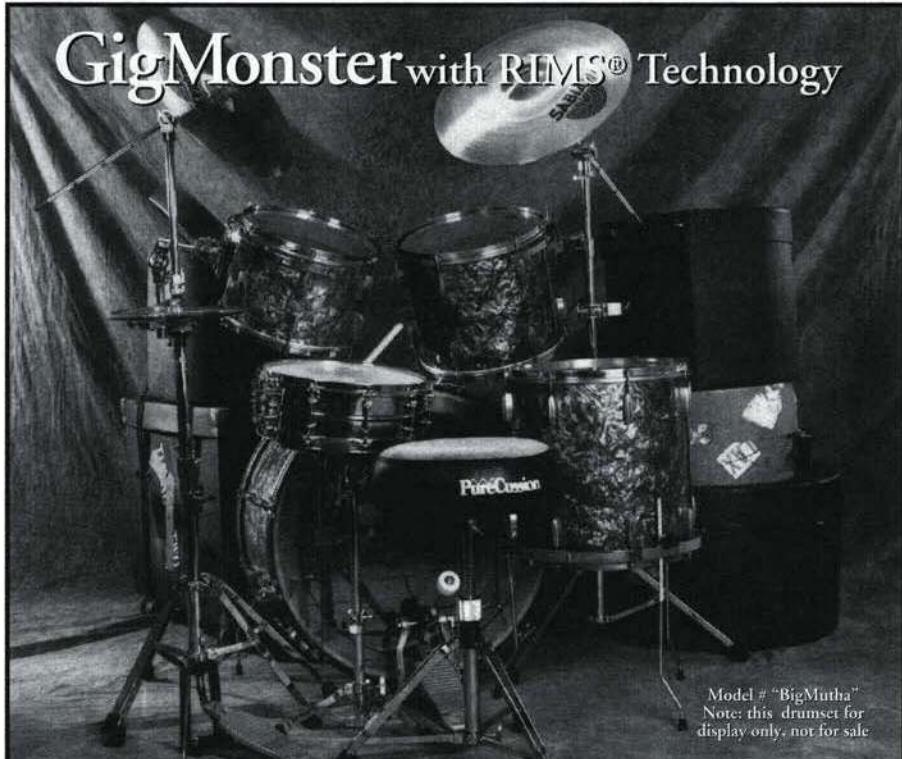
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more comfortable. And since I changed to this setup, I'm able to hit a lot harder. TS: Since you've been dealing with the drums on a high level for a good amount of time, have you found any recurring problems that you've had to face on the instrument?

CB: What's interesting to me is that the music business and the problems that drummers face are the same for everyone, even if you don't play rock 'n' roll. I was in a music store recently where my really good friend Marco works. I was visiting him one day, and playing over in the corner was a drummer, Marvin "Smitty" Smith. I'd never met him before, but he asked Marco if it was me. Marco introduced us and it's funny how we really communicated well right from the start. He's from the jazz school, and here I was from the rock school. I just wanted to know about things from the jazz aspect, and he was interested to know about things from the rock side. We were asking each other about our experiences, and there are a lot of differences, but also a lot of similarities.

I saw things in a different way after speaking to him. I always felt that jazz drummers in general get more respect in a magazine like *Modern Drummer* than rock drummers do. I don't know if it's true or not, it's just the feeling I get. There were times when I'd buy the magazine and there would be a jazz guy I'd never heard of before, which is a good thing because you're exposing drummers to different things. I always felt I couldn't relate to anyone other than the rock guys. After that conversation, I realized it doesn't matter what you play. Everybody has something to constantly deal with. It was great to share experiences with somebody from a totally different background, and yet someone who played drums.

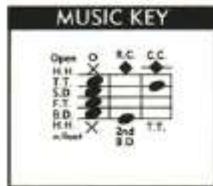
TS: Would you consider trying something in the realm of jazz for yourself?

CB: I would like to try it. Whether or not I could actually *play* it is another question. I could tell just by the way he talked that Smitty could get up on a kit and rip in *any* situation. You can just feel that about a person. There are some drummers who can talk a really good game, but when they get up there they lose it. You've got to talk with your hands—that's what counts.



Grooves Of Inspiration

■ by Darren Haitmanek



Most drummers agree that two important musical concepts are *groove playing* and *feel*. Groove is locking in with the band by playing that in-the-pocket rhythm, and feel is how each musician approaches the groove and executes it tastefully. When these concepts are combined effectively in a drummer's playing, the results can be inspiring. There is definitely something special about a drummer who performs music with "heart and soul."

Many influential drummers are known for more than just their speed and flash. An unmistakable feel with a good sense of musicality made many of today's top drummers and their bands famous. Their drumbeats became "grooves of inspiration." Drummers such as Jeff Porcaro, John Bonham, Manu Katche, Phil Rudd, and Lars Ulrich influenced countless other drummers with their classic grooves and unique feels. Let's take a look at these masters in action.

The late Jeff Porcaro's solid groove makes Toto's hit "Rosanna" come alive. Note how Jeff's use of ghost strokes propels this half-time shuffle.

Manu Katche added a new dimension to Peter Gabriel's *So* album, especially on the track "That Voice Again." Manu seems to imply the rhythm by playing *around* the beat.

Lars Ulrich inspired drummers by propelling Metallica's "One" with this hard-driving feel. This pattern appears near the end of the tune. (The hi-hat is played partially open.)

Drum legend John Bonham grooved hard with this shuffle on Led Zeppelin's "Fool In The Rain." Many famous drummers cite Bonham as a main influence on their playing. Although all of Bonham's playing is accepted as legendary, these two patterns from "Fool" are a classic example of his talent.

Phil Rudd's playing on AC/DC's "You Shook Me All Night Long" is very effective. This is a simple rock beat, yet the way Phil grooves makes it unforgettable.

Hopefully the grooves discussed in this article will inspire you to create your own patterns. The drummers and recordings discussed represent only a small sample of the wealth of talent in today's music.



WFL Twin Strainer

■ by Harry Cangany

A drum collector needs to be a detective at heart—and also to have a little luck. I've spent days browsing in flea markets, antique shops, little music stores, big music stores, and any other place that looked like a good prospect. And I have found a few things. But you hear about people who stumble over a *Radio King* or find a *Black Beauty* under contact paper, and pray for such luck to come your way. Pictured here is one of my finds.

The drum is the WFL *Twin Strainer* model (also known as the *Ray Bauduc* model, the *World's Fair* model, and the *Solo Twin* model). I had looked and looked for one—and, one day, into my shop walked this drum along with a WFL set from 1938. The owner agreed to split up the set if his price could be met. It was, and I immediately went to work cleaning the shell and polishing the metal.

There are two reasons this snare drum is so collectible. The first is its unique design. Other snare drums employed two sets of snares years before this beauty hit the streets, but the prior designs had one set of snares under each head. The WFL featured two sets under the bottom head. The twin strainers were designed by Cecil Strupe. Strupe had been the chief engineer at Leedy and was one of the owners of L&S (Leedy & Strupe), which was a short-lived company started after the Conn company bought Leedy and moved it to Elkhart, Indiana.

As L&S folded, Strupe joined forces with William F. Ludwig. Mr. Ludwig decided to leave Conn six years after he had sold the Ludwig & Ludwig company to them. I'm sure it was tough for Bill Ludwig to work for someone else and to fight to make sure that Conn didn't favor its other company—Leedy. So he took his Conn stock and sold it. What had been worth \$1,000,000 in 1930 was worth \$100,000 in 1936. Mrs. Ludwig became the keeper of the funds and released them as necessary.

Mr. Ludwig moved back to Chicago, bought a building on Damen Avenue, and started the William F. Ludwig Drum Company. Conn's lawyers quickly pointed out that they owned the Ludwig name, so Mr. Ludwig changed the fledgling organization to the WFL Drum Company.

The earliest WFL drums used a pressed-steel lug called the *Zephyr*, which I don't consider very attractive. But they did have a cast lug available on their top-end models. The *Twin Strainer* model was certainly the top-end snare. Each strainer holds a separate set of snares. The right unit has ten wires, while the left unit has six silk-wrapped wires.

The shell is three plies of mahogany, and the inside of the shell is not finished. The metal work is nickel. This particular model shows the second WFL Keystone badge. It reads: "WFL line, William F. Ludwig President."



The earliest and rarest badge will read the "William F. Ludwig Drum Company." The Keystone logo was picked for WFL to quickly differentiate it from the common oval badges of the competitors. Apparently, Bill Ludwig favored a motor oil that used the Pennsylvania state symbol—a keystone. The *Twin Strainer* model with the WFL badge has a better-working strainer than the slightly earlier model. The visible differences are the badge and the shape of the strainer arms. The earlier model has straight arms, while the arms on the second version have a slight curve that provides smoother operation.

Cecil Strupe went on to engineer other products, one of which touches all drummers today. Collectors quickly become familiar with straight, single-flange, double-flange, and triple-flange hoops. While Slingerland, Leedy, Ludwig and Ludwig, and Gretsch went on using single- and double-flange models, little upstart WFL used the triple-flanged design. Cecil invented them by taking a pair of pliers and bending back the top section of a double-flange rim. The idea was to save sticks, and for a while only WFL promoted it.

Strupe's strainer, lug, and rim designs came together for this crowning glory of WFL. The only other memorable invention he had before leaving the drum world was the inner workings of the WFL *Victorious* drums of World War II. Taking an earlier design from his L&S days for a drum he called *Master Tension*, Strupe invented a tuning system that worked by tightening the heads from the inside of the drum. This same principle came back in 1953 when Leedy introduced their knob-tension drums. But that's another story.

Excellent examples of WFL *Twin Strainer* models should retail for \$650 to \$1,000. Look for original snares, and check the badge and strainer design.

Harry Cangany is the owner and operator of The Drum Center of Indianapolis, a combination business and museum specializing in collecting and restoring vintage drums. As such, Harry is a nationally recognized authority in this field.



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The purpose of this department is to provide an avenue of communication directly between the consumers of drum and percussion equipment and those who design and manufacture that equipment. We invite all MD readers to respond to the questions presented; a representative selection of responses will be printed in a following issue.

February '93's question was:

Would you be willing to pay a reasonable amount to offset a manufacturer's production costs for a recorded "sound sampler" accurately demonstrating the sounds of a new line of drums, cymbals, or other percussion equipment?



Living far away from the larger drumshops, I'd be more than happy to pay for a CD sound sampler that not only contains a company's new lines, but also their older lines of cymbals that are still in production. That would make choosing the right cymbal easier for those of us purchasing mainly by mail order.

Has Rosenberg
Lemvig, Denmark



Sound samplers by manufacturers would not only waste our money, but theirs as well. No drummer worth the weight of his sticks would buy a piece of equipment after listening to someone (or something) else play it. When it comes to the sound of the instrument, a good musician would play first and pay later. This ensures that there is uniformity between the instrument and the player's style, as well as uniformity with the rest of the kit.

Refrain from trying to thrill the amateurs, and show some respect for the pros by keeping the prices down.

Todd Singleton
Raleigh NC



I would *happily* pay for manufacturers' sound samplers. I could listen to them over and over, thus not irritating owners of stores in my area who carry the product—to say nothing of saving me long trips to hear the products if my local stores don't carry them. It would also spare me disappointment upon receiving items via mail-order and not liking a product at all. So come on manufacturers: Start recording!

Danny Wyant
Sioux City IA



Encouraging music stores to have more acoustic drums and cymbals set up and available to try (in a separate room, if possible) would help the consumer more than would a sound sampler. On the other hand, a cassette tape of drum machines or

other electronic sound sources—along with a synopsis of their operating manuals—would be advisable.

Robert Richmond
Ottumwa IA



For me, the need for recorded sound samplers is particularly great when attempting to shop for cymbals—especially a new line whose specific nuances I may not be familiar with yet. I like to nail the kick drum when trying out the cymbal, in order to get a full understanding of its depth, tone, and spread. How many stores do you think are going to let you get away with that?

Any manufacturer's price would be well worth the peace of mind I would have, knowing that I have a full understanding of the equipment's specifications and limitations.

Don DiMuccio
Cranston RI



The problem with your question is the word "accurately." Anyone who has ever recorded knows that you can "color" the sound through the recording process. The use of outboard equipment (reverb, gating, etc.) and microphones alone will change the sound of the instrument being recorded. How would the consumer know if the recording is accurate? Also, the type of equipment you play that recording on, and the acoustics of the room you are in, will alter the sound. I think it would be a waste of time and money to purchase a recording of something that will, without a doubt, sound different from the actual sound of the instrument. One last note: As any drummer knows, cymbals and drums have such diverse—yet subtle—tone characteristics, it would be virtually impossible to go into a store and purchase a cymbal or a kit that sounds just like the one on the recording.

Glenn Schaffer
Bellmore NY



This month's question pertains to advertising. The manufacturers of drums, cymbals, and related equipment spend tremendous amounts of money each year on ads to inform you about their products and interest you in buying them. But these ads take a wide variety of forms. Some focus on the products, some focus on artists, and some are more "abstract" in nature. Our question this month is:

What information should be included in any product ad in order to make the ad valuable for you?

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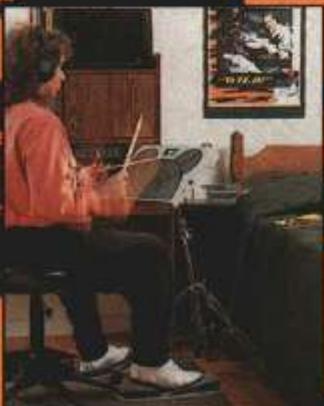
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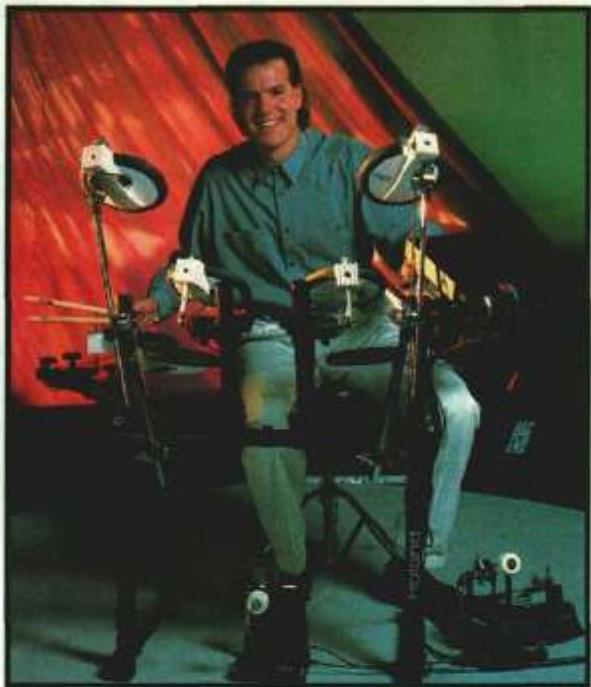
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MICHAEL BAKER

continued from page 29

made jazz what it is, it's an incredibly hard music to play.

RF: So how did you set out to learn it?

MB: I thought I was doing the right thing by going to North Texas State. I'm not going to say I learned a lot about jazz music at North Texas State. I learned about how to study music, getting what you need to become a musician. But my actual learning to play jazz was not at school, it was in the streets, going to jazz clubs in Dallas after school hours. There was a place called the Recovery Room, which was a small dive next to a couple of strip joints and a 7-11. There was a guy playing saxophone named Marshall Ivory. I had been at North Texas State almost two years at this point. I sat in one night, and that's when I found out I couldn't swing. I thought I had been playing jazz for about two years, but the old guys will let you know without even saying anything to you.

RF: What was the vibe?

MB: Like, "Next."

RF: Did that kill you?

MB: It didn't kill me, because I was determined to find out what it was about.

RF: But you knew their attitude meant you weren't swinging?

MB: Yeah, because if you were, they would say, "Hey man, you're swinging" or, "It sounds good." And if you weren't, they wouldn't say anything. They wouldn't even look at you, and they wouldn't let you play a second tune. The old cats know. There is no way to mistake that. They know during the first few measures whether you are able to play or not, so they shorten up the tune.

That particular night I was with a friend who I hung out with. He sat in, and his technique was not as good as mine at all—but he knew *what feel* was. He knew how to swing a ride cymbal, and the old guys' reaction to him as opposed to me was like night and day. I said, "Man, what's up with that?" He said, "Hey man, you're not swinging the ride cymbal," so he took me in a room at North Texas and he showed me what I was doing wrong. There are a lot of young guys who do it wrong because they think they're hearing one thing, but actually something else is going on that they need to know. They don't find out what it is because they never go and find out where the music actually comes from.

RF: I've heard varying stories about the school. Someone else told me that they had a terrible experience there because they didn't get into a lab band. What was your experience?

MB: Mixed. During the time I was there, I have to say there was a very heavy element of racism in the music department. When I first got there, there was a certain person who just wasn't looking out for the best interests of all the people. He was the head of the music department at the time, and he allowed things to be the way they were. It was just a feeling in the environment. That person isn't there anymore, though.

That aside, I look back now and say that the experience was good. But when I was there, it was totally devastating for me because I didn't know what to do. You go onto this fairly nice-sized campus, there's this incredible music machine working, telling you you have to take this and that, which will produce

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this. And when you actually get on the outside and find out what the lifestyle of playing the music and being a musician is all about, sometimes that can work to your advantage, and sometimes it can work to your disadvantage.

It was a great lesson for me in survival, because the curriculum was so hard and there was so much to be responsible for that when I got into the real world, I was able to access some of what I learned. I think a lot of times the hardest part about being a musician or trying to learn music is where to look to get what you want. North Texas State was a place where I could access any kind of musical knowledge that I could possibly want to be involved with, because it was in their incredible music library.

The experience made me look at the situation: There were nine lab bands and something ridiculous like a hundred drummers. The 2:00, 3:00, and 4:00 bands have at least two drummers each, and the rest have maybe three, except for the 1:00, which has one. Everybody wants a spot. Gregg [Bissonette] made a band because he could read, and I didn't make a band at first because I froze. But everybody wanted to be the guy there, and that's just like being out here: Everybody wants to be the cat. That kind of trains you for the fight and the push. I learned more about actually *playing* when I moved off campus, though. I set up my own music room and listened to a lot of albums. Any time I had \$4.99, which was the price of an album at the time, I'd buy an old jazz record.

RF: Did you love the art form by then?

MB: No. I was into it, but I didn't *love* it.

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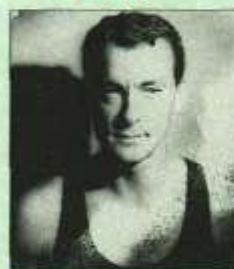
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RF: What were you thinking you were going to do when you finished? What was the goal?

MB: I didn't have one. I had one before I got there, which was to be rich and famous.

RF: But school was kind of a detour.

MB: It was, but you don't know that when you're young; I was already living my goal in Minnesota, but when you're young you're always thinking there's something more out there—which there was. So I went to learn jazz music. I didn't have enough money to go to Berklee or Eastman, where I wanted to go. But my father lived in Texas, so I was able to live with him for a summer and get in-state tuition at North Texas State.

RF: How long were you there?

MB: Four years. I was playing in the 2:00 lab band when I left. Then I went out with Clark Terry. He was looking for a college band to go to Europe with. Branford Marsalis was in the same band, and I guess we did about two months in Europe and then some small-group stuff in the States. I got my butt kicked some more. I didn't know *what* I was doing.

RF: What do you mean?

MB: I didn't know tunes, I didn't know music. I knew what I had heard on records, and I could emulate that playing-wise, but I didn't know *music*. I didn't know old jazz tunes, twelve-bar blues—I didn't understand jazz phrasings. A lot of the styles during certain periods of jazz have particular forms, and one is similar to the next in a lot of ways because they're based around blues and rhythm changes. I didn't know what that was—and neither did the bass player.

RF: After four years at North Texas, you didn't know that?

MB: I'm not going to say they didn't teach me; I didn't *learn* it.

RF: So why did Clark Terry hire you?

MB: Because I could swing by then. This is not a music you learn overnight. He saw the potential and based it on that. When the bass player, Peter Dowdall, and I got the gig, we all met in New York and stayed at the Edison Hotel, where all the jazz guys stay, and we went to work. I remember I bought a Tony Williams drumset. Tony Williams was my hero. I bought a 24" bass drum, 12", 13", 14", 16", and 18" toms—that same Gretsch kit he uses, only in black because I couldn't get it in yellow.

I remember being in the rehearsal room, playing all this stuff, when Clark walked in and put a stop to all of that. Branford could always play, so he knew what he was doing, but we didn't know *what* we were doing. Clark told us he just wanted "clock time" and said to just play the cross-stick. I'd play it for a while and then he'd stop the band, turn around, and say, "Didn't I tell you to play clock time?" I'd play it for a while again, and then I'd try to do something fancy again—and he'd have to stop the band again. He said, "Look, trust me. Play in clock time." After that, I didn't move. I played clock time for most of the tour. He wanted me to learn how to keep control of the big band, because time was supposed to be the essence of that. Since a lot of guys in the band were young, they were still learning about time, placement of notes, swinging, and where you're going to place the beat. So it was up to me to keep time.

RF: That was a big band. What was the difference when you played in the trio? Were you able to do more?

MB: I wasn't able to do too much more, because I still didn't know what I was doing. I still had a feel; I was born with a feel. A lot of people are born with a feel, but learning the music is another thing. I got out there and I didn't know what I was doing. The bass player and I spent the tour talking about the Police and the Rolling Stones. That's what we were really into. He was hipping me to the Clash—and I was playing jazz music!

RF: What did you learn from all of this?

MB: I kept playing jazz. I'll never forget, we were playing a place called Charlie's Georgetown in D.C., and it was the most devastating time for me, trying to learn *what* I was doing wrong. I still didn't know the form of tunes. This was during the small-group time, and Clark was calling the oldest tunes in the world. They were tunes we couldn't possibly be responsible for, but we were supposed to know—that was our job. Clark turned around to me and he had his plunger in his hand. He was so mad and he yelled, "I told you the beat is on 1!" And when I came down, he hit my tom with the plunger and almost knocked the tom off. And then I became a man.

RF: He let you learn the hard way.

MB: Clark is beautiful. That's what makes you get your stuff together. We were still green behind the ears, and we didn't know. These guys had been doing it for years. They paid their dues and were *still* paying dues. We were getting \$400 a week and paying for our hotel rooms over in Europe. Clark still lost his butt, and he got a lot of ridicule for having a college band over there, with people saying, "These cats can't play; they

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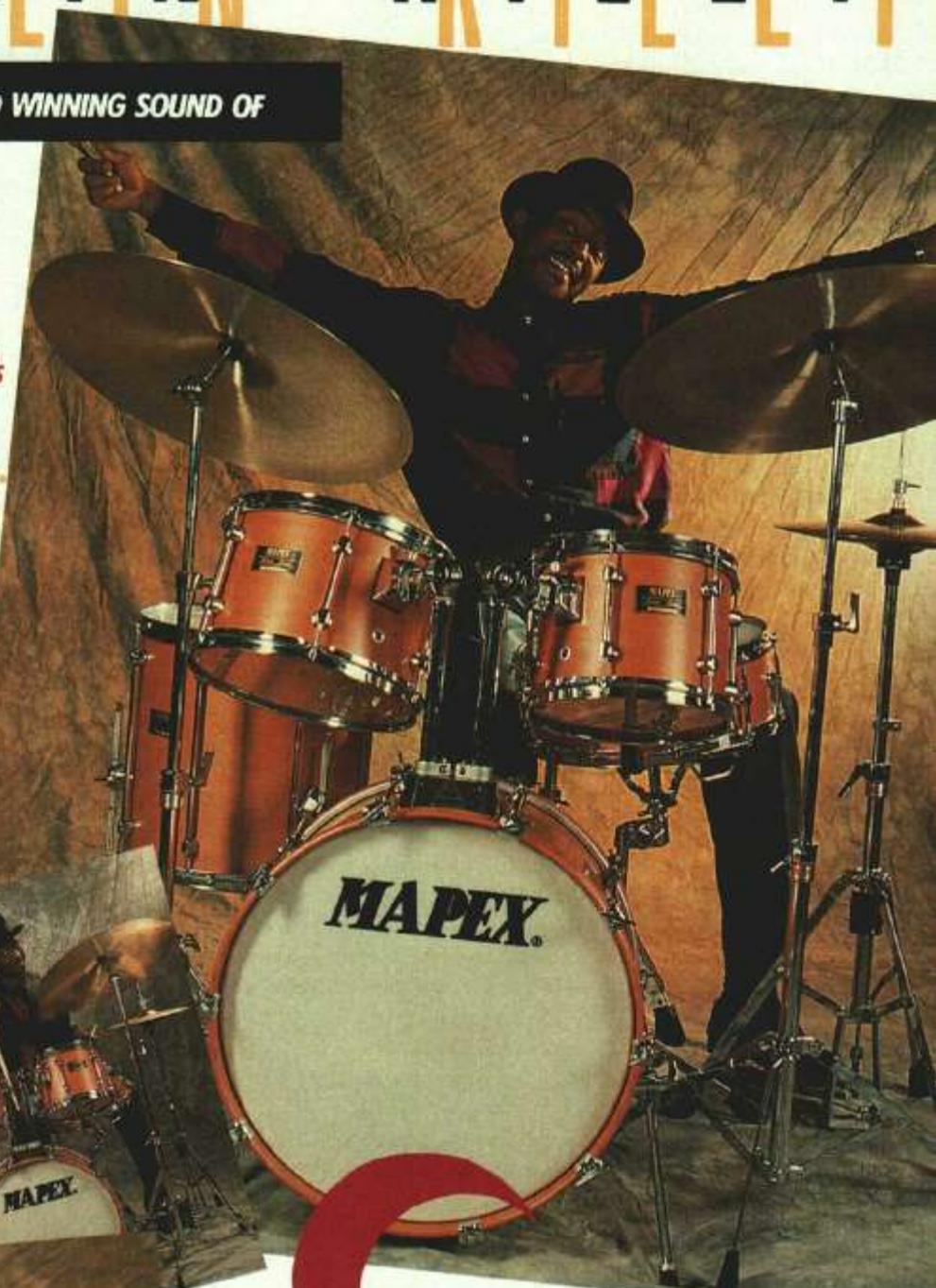


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aren't ready, Clark is just using them." That wasn't it. Clark's heart is very big—one of the biggest hearts I know.

RF: So after D.C., what did you do to get better? Did you study? Did you finally learn the tunes?

MB: I remember Peter and I were up all night, every night, listening to all the old tunes, trying to get it together. That was a terrible week. Needless to say, we didn't play with Clark again as a trio after that. Our hearts weren't really there. It was still a study, and it has to be a *love*.

So I moved to Los Angeles to help my uncle form a record company. It never really happened, though he had a few records out. I was going to be one of the artists, but it didn't work out. But I went down to the union, and they were doing all these rehearsals with the big bands, and I got called to do a few things. I ended up playing with a guy named Leslie Drayton. Snooky Young was playing trumpet, and by that time, I had been doing a lot of practicing. He also got me on Ellington's band to do a couple of dates, and then he got me on the *Sophisticated Lady* show. Gregory Hines was the star of that show at the time, and his brother-in-law was playing drums, so I became the relief drummer. I was getting paid to be there, learn the show, and rehearse the dancers, and when Gregory's brother-in-law was sick or couldn't make it, I would play the show. That lasted for a while, and I got to know all the people on the show. I studied ballet for a lot of years, so I was always intrigued with it.

RF: Why did you study ballet?

MB: I wanted to be a dancer even before I was a drummer, but as a child I was too afraid that I would be called a sissy. I was a dance minor in college, and I still study it. I've danced with two small companies.

RF: Do you feel the dancing helped your playing?

MB: Yes, a lot, because your brain gets a lot of work when you try to execute things on the right- and left-hand sides. When you're a dancer and you go across the floor, the teacher may say, "We're going to start on the left side first," so your body gets trained on both sides. So when you're playing your instrument, you're not necessarily thinking of everything starting with the right hand. People have asked me if I'm ambidextrous, and no, I'm not. I'm right-handed, but because I've danced and worked both sides equally, it looks like I am.

RF: People have also asked about your ability to play odd meters.

MB: The way we approach Billy Child's music, which does involve different meters, is that it's all very seamless. You know it's odd time, but the melody is never interrupted. His music is very lyrical. It all makes mathematical and melodic sense.

I studied odd times by playing in odd times, but to be honest, I've never spent a lot of time trying to *learn* them. I don't know if I'd be a better drummer if I knew what I was doing, but I don't think of the fact that something is in 7/4 or 6/8 or 5/8. When I'm looking at the charts when we first start off reading and learning the music, I see that it's in 5/8, but when the music starts playing, the melodies are so seamless, and the ideas blend from one section into another without interruption or musical problems. So when I'm playing it, it all just becomes one song, rather than this measure and that measure. It sounds like it's going from one meter to another because we

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know that it's not in 4. But it's a song, and when you learn the song, you just play the song.

RF: But where did you actually get the background for odd-time playing?

MB: At North Texas they would put together these charts with odd-time measures. They approached it very mathematically.

RF: So you learned the basics.

MB: I was always afraid of reading. I'm still afraid of reading. It can be terrifying. If I walk into a studio and see a chart that's in 7/8, I start trying to figure it out immediately. But it's easier if they just play me the song. I used to fake it sometimes at school. The bass player would start off, and I could figure it out from there. You see the 7/8 there, but it becomes easy when the measures become music. A lot of my knowledge also comes from listening to other drummers, like Billy Cobham. I'd see how they approached it, going from one measure to the next and making it seem like it's not an odd-time meter, even though you know it is. Also, both Louie Bellson books were invaluable in getting reading and odd time together. But music is the bottom line. You really have to have both the knowledge and the feel.

RF: Where did you come in contact with Billy Childs?

MB: We met on a gig in Long Beach. Then one night we met at the Baked Potato, where we were both hanging out. Then we got together and played. Now I've done three albums with him over the course of six or seven years.

RF: How long were you with Joe Zawinul?

MB: For about two years.

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RF: What did Joe need from you?

MB: Joe is so meticulous about his drummers. The first time I ever saw Joe play was with Weather Report at the Beverly Theater. I remember buying a ticket and seeing Omar Hakim play. I didn't stay for the whole concert; I couldn't take it. It was so incredible. I just walked out of there nearly in tears, thinking, "I'll never be that good. I'll never do this."

I had been playing with Jimmy Smith and Phil Upchurch in a trio for about four years, so when Scott Henderson, who I used to play with, called me to play with Joe, I knew how to play organ trio. I knew how to push the band. I knew how to play ahead of the beat, pushing it, and I knew that was what Joe was about. I knew I had done my homework, having played with some of the older guys like Kenny Burrell, Jimmy and Phil, Johnny Griffin, and Esther Phillips. And I was practicing, but that's when I met my wife, and I was trying to get to know her more than practice, to be honest. But I went to Joe's house, shook his hand, looked him straight in the eye, and said to myself, "I've got this gig. I know I'm doing this gig." There was no doubt in my mind before we even sat down to play.

RF: You felt like your homework had been done for a change?

MB: I felt like *some* homework had been done, because Joe opened up a whole new book of homework that I needed to do. I was playing mechanically up to a certain point. Many drummers have incredible chops, but there's a certain point where you don't need a million chops. You realize that it has to be in your heart, too. You have to learn to get to the place where all the dumb stuff in your life is out of the way—get your act together so you can let your mind play the music spontaneously. It was a journey with Joe, and it taught me a lot. The first thing he said to me was, "You've got to work on your hi-hat and your bass drum." That meant I had to find out what to do with my hi-hat when playing certain music, like the 16th-note patterns, and how to use the hi-hat to push the band. Joe is coming from the old school as well. Although he is playing all the updated keyboards—MIDI and everything—his favorite composer is Duke Ellington. Joe's concept is like, "I've got the oboes here, the horns here, the trumpets over here," and it's the Ellington band, but then taking it a step further into what he wants to hear.

Joe plays music from the soul, from his "human-ness," which is what we tried to capture with the Zawinul Syndicate. It was very spontaneous. There were patterns and things he wanted us to play, but I really learned how to take charge of a situation. That helps build confidence.

RF: What did he mean about the bass drum?

MB: He likes it in just the right place. In the pocket, punching. Joe's a boxer, and his rhythmic feelings are like that of a boxer—lefts and hooks, rights. That's one of the things I've learned from Joe—using your life experience in your music.

RF: Why did that situation come to an end?

MB: I was getting younger.

RF: Meaning?

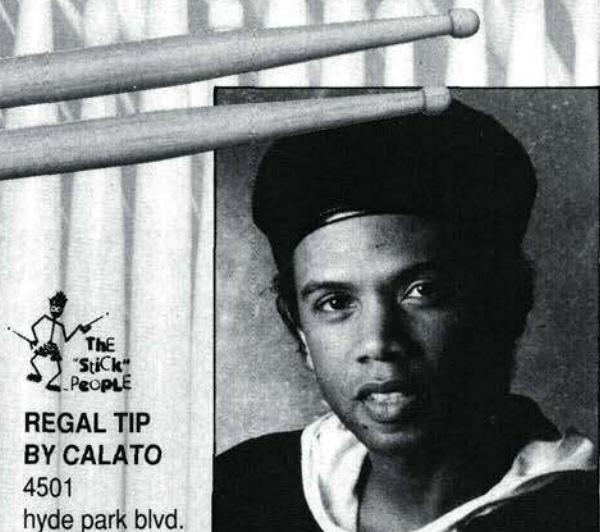
MB: I wanted to get back to where I started.

RF: Something else came along?

MB: No, I had no gigs when I left Joe. I had nothing, but I realized I wanted to play rock 'n' roll and continue to do the things I was doing before I ever heard of jazz. It was full-circle.

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RF: You wanted to be rich and famous.

MB: It's not about being rich and famous now. It's that I want to be happy. I want my wife and daughter to be happy and comfortable, to have a good life. I feel as though I'm starting all over again now. After you work with Joe, you either become extremely successful or you quit the business. We fought a lot. Now that I look back on it, he wouldn't call it fighting.

RF: Was it about what he wanted musically?

MB: Yes, his vision, what he wanted. Joe is like a kid. He's always searching for the next groove. Like most, I'd get sort of tired of music sometimes, and then I'd go over to Joe's house and all of a sudden—boom—it'd be as if the lights came on again. It's always, "Check this out, check this out...." How does this guy, who is approaching sixty, have all this energy to keep wanting more out of something he's been doing since before I was born?

RF: So what did you argue about?

MB: Sometimes we argued about the monitors not being loud enough, where he couldn't hear the bass drum or certain things. We never argued about arrangements of music; it was always performance. You can always play arrangements, but can you do them with passion? That's what he expected. A lot of times I thought I might be playing his music wrong. Maybe I *never* played it right. Maybe a lot of guys never played it right, if they would admit that.

RF: Did you feel like you weren't playing it right? Did he make you feel like that?

MB: Sure he did. And I love him for it, because when you get

ready to do something else, it makes you reach just a little bit harder. I started doing Whitney's thing, and it makes me reach just a little bit harder, and I still never feel like I do enough. But it makes you look inside your tempos, your beats, what your cymbals sound like, and your choice of drumkit. It makes you reach harder, because he's always searching in his own music.

RF: How did the Whitney gig come about?

MB: I was working with Gerald Albright at the Hollywood Bowl, and the keyboard player said Whitney was looking for a drummer. I said, "That's great. I hope she finds one."

RF: Why didn't you consider it?

MB: Because I didn't want to do it. I wanted to work on my own music. But like I said at the beginning of this interview, God is running this show; I ain't running anything. So another drummer they had wasn't working out, and I got a call from

Ricky Minor, the bass player/conductor, two days later, while I was in the studio trying to work on my own music. He said, "Mike, come down and check this gig out." It must have been what God wanted, because I had absolutely no interest at the time.

RF: Yet, it's actually closer to your original plan.

MB: Exactly, but you don't see those things. It was the right thing to do. But I don't know what I'm doing; I just take it one day at a time. I have absolutely no plans. A lot of people were probably going, "How does that work out? He's a jazz guy." This town is definitely one for labels. But people don't know that this is what I started doing.

RF: In an *Update* story we did once, you said jazz has a certain language. What's the difference between the language of jazz and that of commercial music?

MB: If I were doing Joe's gig, I'd use a 20" bass drum, a piccolo snare, a lot of drums, and a certain array of colors on the cymbals. With Whitney, I use the Yamaha Rock Tour series, with power toms, a 22" bass drum and a big, deep snare, which I may hit a little differently, in the center more than on the edge. And the set itself alters the approach. Right after I did some Whitney dates, Freddie Hubbard called, and I used a real small kit with an 18" bass drum.

RF: Will the Whitney Houston gig be a good training ground for you?

MB: It's an excellent training ground because it's definitely closer to what I want to do. Don't get me wrong, I can't say I'm going to put jazz aside, because it's been so much a part of my life. Now I've played jazz longer than I've played pop music—although it wasn't necessarily by my choosing. I always wanted to play rock 'n' roll.

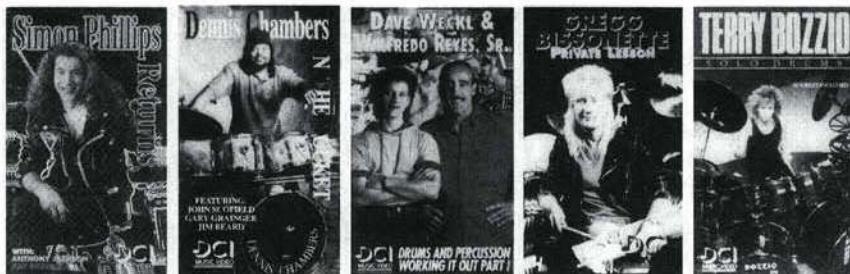
RF: Since you were known as a jazz guy, why do you think you got the Whitney gig?

MB: Ricky hired me. They get the music totally together before she ever comes in.

RF: But she has the right to fire you. So why does she keep you?

MB: Whitney is a very spiritual person. She's a Christian and she's very down-to-earth. People feel vibes. It's more than just being up there, playing the drums. Maybe a million guys could do the gig, but a lot of things come into play when you enter that situation. The bottom line is

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RF: You're probably playing much bigger

places than you ever played when you were playing jazz. What do you have to know about that?

MB: You're not going to reach as many people with a million notes as you are with one big note. You have to deliver a big sound and know the time and the songs. The drummer is the most important person up there, holding everything together. I've learned a lot playing with Whitney. I've learned you have a lot of people up there, and you definitely have

to set up figures and measures. You have to keep the band pumped up. You have to kick them in the butt and keep it moving. I have to watch the conductor because he's watching Whitney, and then I have to watch Whitney, too, on certain songs. She'll cut things off, so I have to watch her like a hawk. Everybody has a job to do. The techs and people behind the stage have their jobs that are just as important. When you're playing those big places, it's a machine, and there is no time for mistakes.

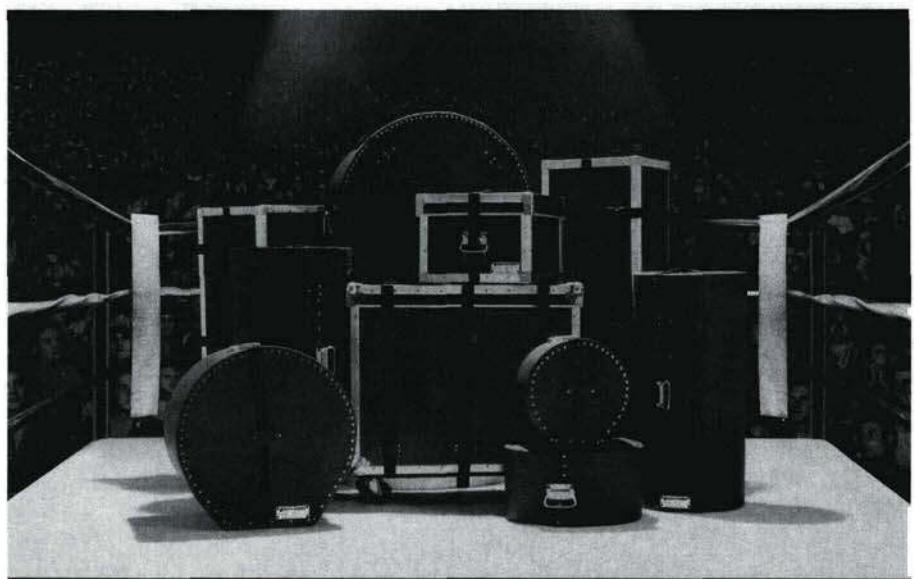
When I got Whitney's gig, I had to really prep my head and listen to Ricky Lawson. Ricky was doing a lot of things that made the show work. [Lawson did the gig before leaving for Michael Jackson.] When you're playing jazz, you get to express a lot of yourself, but in this situation, it's not about you. It's about what Whitney and Ricky Minor want to hear. When I listen to the tapes of Ricky Lawson playing, I can hear that he has that quality that people can count on.

On the technical side I also have to have my electronics together for this gig. We use a rack for my stuff. There are a couple of *S1000s*, an Akai *MPC60*, and different effects. We're basically triggering the kick and snare, and there are samples off of her records so that it sounds as close as possible. There's definitely a big difference doing this. I've never done anything of this capacity before, where everything sounds like or better than the record.

There isn't any sequencing going on, though when you hear it out front, it sounds like we're playing to a sequencer. She actually sings better live than what you've heard on the records. I had never really bought any of her albums until Ricky told me to get them and learn certain songs for the audition. But my appreciation of her as an artist grew because I sing and I know how hard it is to sing. It's a great situation. It's a great organization, with great people. It is a totally professional, well-oiled machine.

RF: Your background now is almost more jazz. Do you use any of that for Whitney's gig?

MB: I do feel that the background adds to my capabilities. It all goes back to being in a smokey little club with those old jazz cats. You want to sit in and you've got one chance to make an impression. You go up there and play, and all of a sudden the cats turn around and say, "Yeah, that's it!"



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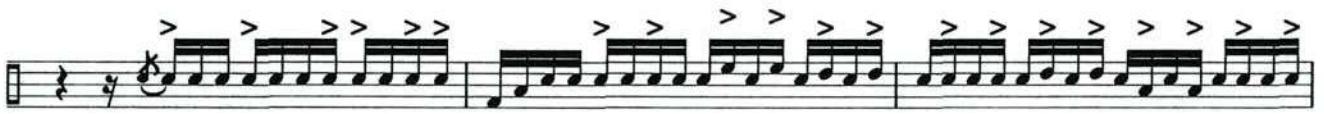
Steve Gadd: "Samba Song"

■ Transcribed by Richard D. Rychel

This month's *Drum Soloist* features Steve Gadd from Chick Corea's *Friends* album (Polygram 49071, recorded 1978). On this track, Corea and bassist Eddie Gomez lay down an interesting montuno-type ostinato that Gadd takes some liberties with. Gadd helped to pioneer this increasingly popular type of ostinato soloing. The solo takes place near the end of the tune, after the bass solo.

MUSIC KEY	
Open	O
H.H.	X
T.T.	*
S.D.	C.C.
F.T.	
B.D.	
H.H. w/foot	X
	T.T.

J = 140



Progressive Single-Stroke Endurance Exercise: Part 1

■ by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Tom Poitras



To drummers, the single-stroke roll is one of the most valuable tools. It consists of alternate sticking, as opposed to the rudimental roll (RR LL), or the multiple-bounce (buzz) roll. The following exercise will be well worth the effort, and should be included in your daily workout.

These exercises should be practiced slowly at first with a metronome, increasing the speed gradually depending on your development. Always practice in a relaxed manner, paying careful attention to the evenness of the strokes.

The following can be thought of as the foundation of this exercise (to which we will expand with 16th notes). Play each bar two to four times, or continuously run through the entire study.

1 2
3 4
5 6
7 8

This next sequence merely consists of taking the last bar of the previous exercise (straight 16th notes) and placing it before all eight bars that you just played.

1 2
3 4

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Page 1 of 2

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Page 2 of 2

5



6



7



8

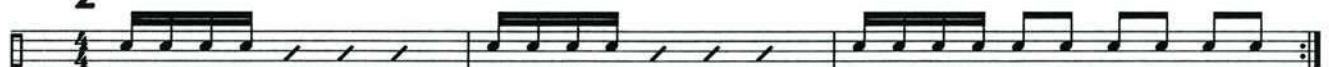


Finally, add another measure of 16ths before what you have just played.

1



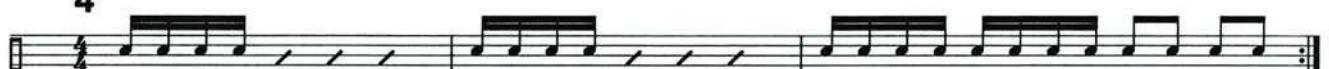
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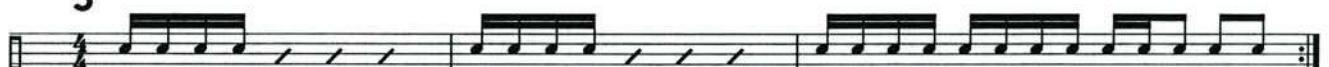
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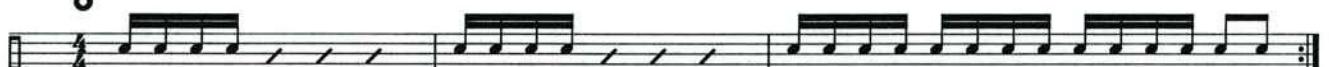
4



5



6



7



8



This exercise can be continued up to twenty or more sequences. For instance, at the twentieth sequence, you will have nineteen bars of 16th notes preceding each original bar. And be sure to start the exercise with either hand. Work at your own pace, and have fun with it!



STREET DRUMMERS

continued from page 33

not as if we're all born into poverty and are living on the streets. We picked up a recording session off the street once. Plus, we pick up other gigs. It's a full-time job for us, six days a week."

Dick Weller has recently worked with Mike Mainieri, Mike and Leni Stern, Jeff Andrews, Fred Hersh, and Rick Margitza in local clubs. Looking up pays off.

BROOKLYN BASHING

One thing all street drummers have in common is the ability to get the most music possible out of a small, transportable kit. Many use no bass drum at all, and pare down cymbals to a single ride and a set of hi-hats. Sometimes, eliminating a sound source can cause you to find alternate ways to be creative, getting you closer to the center of the rhythm and your place in it.

Brooklynite Sadiq Abdushahid is a master of getting more from less. Playing in a ragged, Art Blakey-ish style, Sadiq lays into his 18" K Zildjian ride, 14" hi-hats, and a snare drum with a gruff, raspy swing. With his full beard, dark, sleepy eyes, and gracious manner, Sadiq lends an air of mysticism to the hard reality of the street. Born in Cleveland, Sadiq got a lot of experience during the Motown era, working in Detroit with acts like Mary Wells, the Egyptians, and

the Temptations. Later he worked in area clubs with jazz greats like Archie Shepp, Sam Rivers, and Bobby Hutcherson. He even recorded a now-rare album with organist Larry Young on the ESP label. (The record lists the drummer as Archie Taylor, Sadiq's given name.)

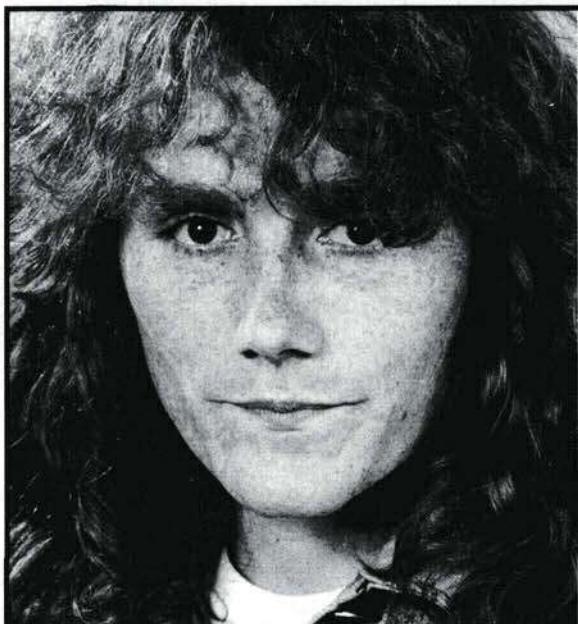
Fully portable, Sadiq moves his three-piece set around in a golf bag with wheels. The subway system takes him from borough to borough. Playing without the bass drum would be like having one of your limbs severed for most drummers, but Sadiq sees it simply as assimilation. "Jack Dejohnette has said that it's good for a drummer to practice without any drums at all," says Sadiq. "Just play air drums. It will give you a different perspective. It's the same way with some of the pieces. Leave a piece out and you'll have to make up for it in some other way. I do more coloring on the snare. Different areas of the head can produce different sounds. The center is fat, the edges are thin. There are different rim sounds, and you can muffle the snare with your hand for more variations. If you *think* about the bass drum it will sound like it's there, just by imagining and playing some of the licks on the snare drum."

I first heard Sadiq in front of the Brooklyn Courthouse, working with the Zane Massey group. Zane is the son of

jazz composer Cal Massey, who wrote songs recorded by tenor saxophonists John Coltrane and Hank Mobley in the '60s. The group played straight-ahead jazz, aiming to please themselves as much as anyone else. Later in the day they could be found near Times Square, playing show tunes for tourists sightseeing in the theater district. Cool jazz like "Canteloupe Island" and "Red Clay" give way to cornball numbers like "Yes Sir, That's My Baby" and sprightly two-steps. Unlike the BMF band, the Zane Massey group changes their set with the look of the crowd.

"The different people I work with will have their own show," says Sadiq. "We'll tailor the repertoire to fit each particular crowd. Zane is into Louis Jordan, jump, barrelhouse. Another guy I work with, Roy Campbell, likes things that float, but that doesn't make as much money. Good music will make money. Bossa novas, funk, shuffles, and slow blues make the most money." Speaking of money, on Sadiq's best day, he earned \$300. On that particular Saturday the group started early at the Central Park boathouse, played lunchtime at Grand Central Station, and wound it up playing late at West Fourth Street and Broadway—an area jumping with shoppers piling out of Tower Records.

Unlike most street musicians, Sadiq's



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Richie Gajate Garcia
(Hiroshima, LA Sessions)

Kevin Ricard

(LA Sessions, Kenny Loggins)

Photo: Kristen Dahline

group is totally legal. No police will ever hassle them, and they'll never have to blow another band off their turf. Getting their permit from the Music Under New York program (MUNY), the group signs up for a registered, bi-weekly spot. "There are a lot of people trying to get into this program," says Sadiq. "Auditions are held every December, and a lot of great players show up. Part of the program includes playing for city functions. Sometimes the mayor will bring guests into the subway. We usually have to play for that. We get paid as if it's a regular gig. And I do pay taxes on all the money I make."

Being associated with the city has lead to the group playing the streets in foreign countries. In 1989 they were sent to Italy, where they shared the plazas with baroque chamber groups. The quartet was paid \$2,400 for ten days.

Even though being sanctioned by the city would seem to be the best way to work the streets, the majority of street musicians aren't interested. Maybe the outlaw attitude is what attracts them—the thrill of the chase.

Sadiq got his start on the street in

1976 with saxophonist George Braith, who recorded on Blue Note in the early '70s. Full of stories from his thirty-odd years of playing, Sadiq has learned from many musicians. On one corny show tune, he plays a hypnotic shuffle that lasts for about twenty minutes. He cites Art Blakey as his inspiration. "I learned the art of repetition—repeating one idea over and over without varying it. When you apply that with a band, you can create a hypnotic effect that makes it easy to reach people. You keep doing it until it begins to have a swing of its own. A lot of people call it the 'juju spirit.' Blakey taught me that. It works with a backbeat too. People like Dejohnette can be very creative with the juju spirit."

Sadiq occasionally works in the subway (though this usually isn't allowed by the police), using only brushes, since the subway produces lots of harsh echo. And if you annoy the homeless men who live behind trash bins and in the tunnels, they will come looking for you, as Sadiq explains: "One day I was working with a washtub bassist at the Park Slope station. [As the bassist plucks a tautly stretched rope, the drummer plays brushes on the

upturned washtub.] We heard this loud banging sound—bang! Then somebody mumbled. We looked around, and there's this huge guy, naked, holding this big beam. He was swinging the beam, bashing the subway columns with it, and he was slowly moving toward us. I think he lived down in the subway and didn't like our music."

Like many hustling musicians, Sadiq is working on recording projects. By the time you read this, Delmark Records will be releasing albums from both the Zane Massey and Roy Campbell groups. Both will contain original compositions in the classic '60s-era Blue Note style, punctuated by Sadiq's nasty, multi-hued propulsion.

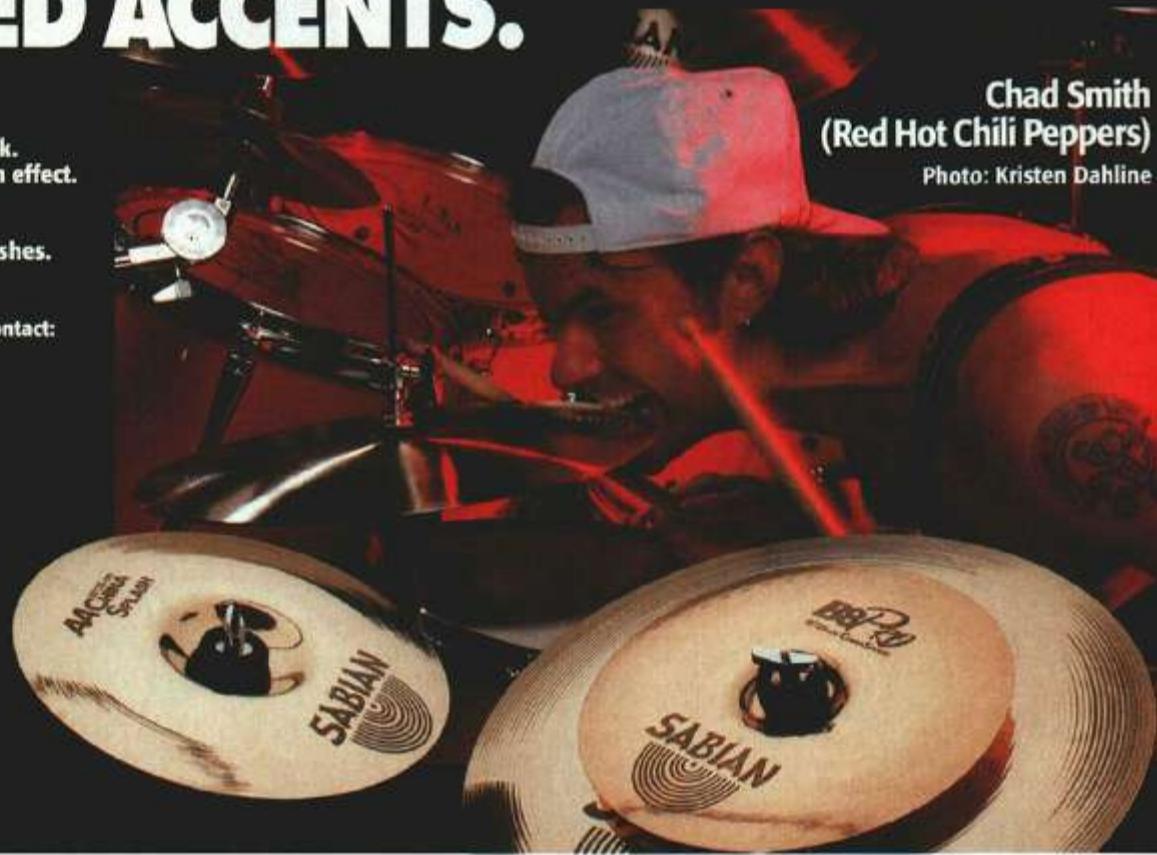
FATHER TIME

In addition to quartets, quintets, duos, and the like, New York's crowded streets play host to one-man bands, roving standup comedians, mimes, acrobats, and dancers. Stomping the pavement, break-dancing, and kicking up the dust, the New York City Float Committee is a nine-piece troupe that traverses the country, electrifying entire square blocks

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Chad Smith

(Red Hot Chili Peppers)

Photo: Kristen Dahline

with incendiary strutting and voluminous energy.

Taking over the lawn of the Washington, D.C. Mall in grueling August heat, NYCFC can be heard almost a half mile away. What sounds from a distance like a boom box blasting out a hip-hop beat is actually the raw power of Ayan Williams as he provides rhythm for the NYCFC dancers. Dressed in matching football jerseys, the dancers break for close to thirty minutes at a stretch as Ayan pours on the groove.

Playing with the bombast of Billy Cobham, the energy of the drummer for the old Ike and Tina Turner review, and the funkiness of Bernard Purdie, 33-year-old Ayan Williams is a powerhouse—a real killer. Switching from flashy 16th-note funk to open-ended, cymbal-bashing rock grooves, Ayan is a thrill to watch. Dark-skinned and muscular, he watches the dancers like a hawk, looking for visual cues as they evolve through steps. He varies rhythms but not tempos, burning for a full twenty-five minutes as sweat soaks his jersey under the hot D.C. sun. Besides being a vegetarian and taking plenty of vitamins, where does all this

endurance come from? "That comes from within," says Ayan. "Even the guys dancing in the sun, those are special dancers. It's like dancing and athletics wrapped into one. This has kept us from becoming drug addicts and alcoholics."

Along with his wife, Jeanette, Ayan is the group's manager, navigator, and director. With his deep voice and big cow eyes, he is very much the dancers' father figure. "I'm watching their moves, keeping the rhythm locked and the energy up. Depending on which dancer is out front, I try to play on his accents. It's almost like improvising with another instrument. When the dancer's out there, I'm accompanying his solo. It's exactly like a Broadway show drummer catching a runway dancer.

"I use the bell a lot with the guys," Ayan says. "It cuts. My job is to get attention: their job is to make sure nobody gets by us. If we set up here [Grant's Tomb on Riverside Drive], the cops might run us off. We'll go to the next block and line up so the people will come see us. We bring the people to us. It's a concentration thing. That's how I developed such volume: being outside

really freed me."

Ayan and his dancers play the entire East Coast and know all the best crowds. "Sometimes we play Restaurant Row in D.C. I have to play very softly there. It's not a good place to start off the day. I'd rather begin where no one will run us off, even if the money's shallow. We like Dupont Circle in D.C., Georgetown, and different places in Manhattan. We love Quincy Market in Boston, plus the cops up there are looser. They don't hassle us. In New York you've got pickpockets, bums.... The cops have a lot more to deal with. New York audiences are good if the act is decent."

Ayan grew up in Boston, and, having trouble finding practice space, would set up in the street. Practicing his jazz chops, he'd attract kids asking him to play funk beats. "They kept botherin' me: 'C'mon mister, please play this beat.' I finally said, 'All right.' They put a shoebox in front of me and started dancing while I played the beat. Ten minutes later the shoebox was full of money. It amazed me. I've been doing it ever since.

"A lot of my musician friends didn't believe I could do this and support



Richie Hayward
(Little Feat)

Photo: Kristen Dahline

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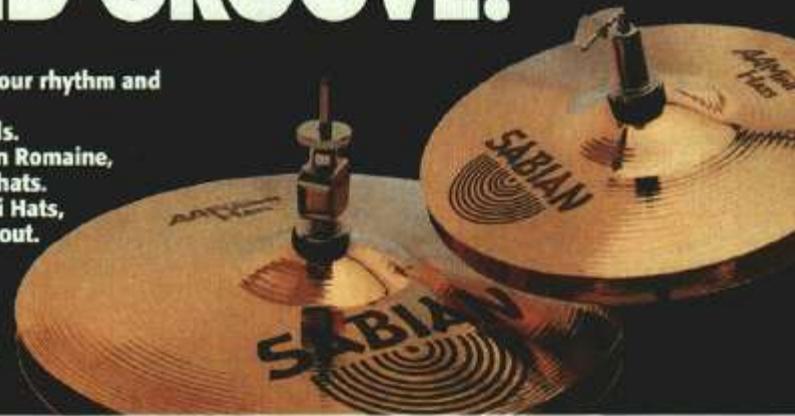


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myself," Ayan says. "It is difficult, but being a musician is difficult regardless. I played with Bill Doggett [popular '50s saxophonist] for two years, making \$200 a week. After all that time, I was in exactly the same place I started. I knew that was not happening. With this, I depend on myself and my fellas."

Ayan credits his involvement with the dancers for keeping him sane and in the music business. "The guys kept me from getting old. If not for this, I would've definitely been a part-time musician, or not even alive. This has been a positive force for keeping these guys together. We've lost some to drug abuse along the way. Now I'm trying to get some of them to go back to school, to really make something of themselves." Managing the group like a quartermaster, Ayan and Jeanette dole out money to the dancers in strict fashion, ensuring that they will be ready when it's time to perform.

"After a good day I would nest-egg my money," Ayan explains, "but the dancers, who are mostly pretty young, would often be broke the next day. So now we save all the change and the big bills and run the

business with that. We make enough during the season—from Easter through September—to carry us through till January. We can usually make \$60 a man for ten thirty-minute shows. One day in New Orleans we made \$240 per man."

Given that he travels so much and plays with such intensity, Ayan has unique tuning and equipment problems. "The weather and the wear and tear from moving around is a big hassle. I tune as close as possible for comfort and then just live with it. Playing as hard as I do, cymbals are hard to keep. As soon as I fall in love with a cymbal, it cracks. And I go through a lot of sticks."

SATURDAY IN THE PARK

Back in New York—in Central Park, to be exact—Mike Campenni plays on a pleasant Saturday with the Jazz Blues Ensemble, a septet lead by trombonist and singer Hassan Hakim, father of Omar Hakim. Entering the park at 81st Street and Central Park West, down past Strawberry Fields, across the runner's path, the group is playing standards with a laid-back, easy gait. Many regular lis-

teners sit down around the grass, soaking up the sun and sounds. Each member takes a long solo, and occasionally Hassan (who has worked with Louis Armstrong and Art Blakey) will vocalize on a chestnut like "Wonderful World." The group includes a Japanese keyboardist, a Danish saxophonist... JBE is a true melting pot of styles, ages, and nationalities. Morris Edwards, the tuba player (formerly of Maynard Ferguson) "boxes" after each song, and that box looks pretty healthy. The Jazz Blues Ensemble seems to have found the best spot in Manhattan.

Like an odd union between Steve Gadd and Philly Joe Jones, Campenni plays articulate and swinging stickings imbued with a thoroughly modern approach. Great time, perfect feel—this is the guy everyone warned you would find in New York. But in their stories, that guy is driving a cab or slinging hash, unable to find a gig among the other hundreds of "burning" players. Truth be known, if you can play and hang in New York, you'll probably find work. In addition to his 11:00 to 5:00 spot every weekend with the JBE (and their weeknight

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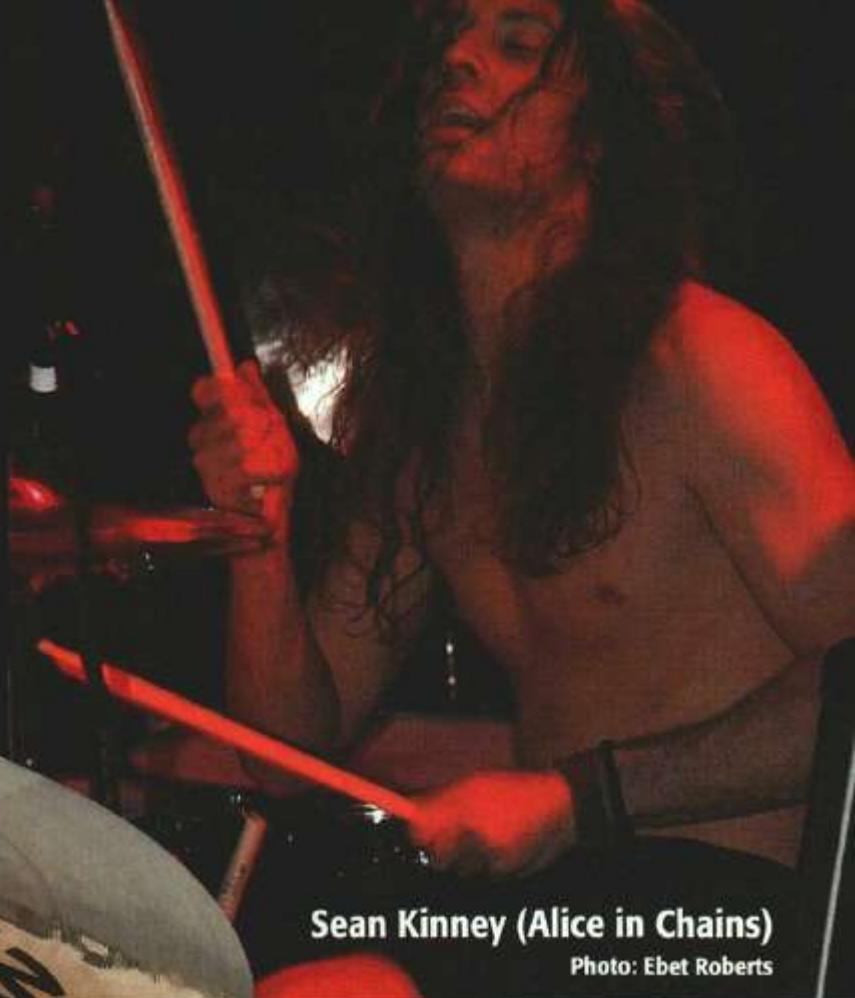
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Sean Kinney (Alice in Chains)

Photo: Ebet Roberts

club work), Campenni works with organ trios in the boroughs and late, late (5 A.M.) after-hours clubs on the Lower East Side. And Campenni is adamant that musicians don't need club owners: "I make more money during the weekend in the park with seven people than I make during the week in clubs. The club owners take advantage of the musicians, and they don't pay anything. Their attitude is, 'If you don't want to play, I've got a list of guys waiting for the same spot.' How many opportunities are there to play jazz? The club owners know we do it because we want to improve ourselves as musicians, and that we love it. At Augies, on the Upper West Side, they pay their musicians by passing the hat—maybe twenty bucks. The Blue Note used to have a jam session, but they charged musicians \$5 to get through the door to play. You knew that wouldn't last: It's insulting."

Campenni's haul from his six-hour day in the park is around \$100, and the band takes cab fare off the top so he can bring his full kit down from his home on 110th Street. "All you really need is a snare drum, hi-hats, and a cymbal," says

Campenni. "And bring a couple of mats to make a level playing surface. The tunes people respond to are the ones they can feel. The beat has to really communicate to the people. Be concerned with the pulse. You don't only have to play what you think they're familiar with. If it's really good, they'll respond. But it can't be too out; it has to have certain elements that people can naturally respond to—rhythm, groove, and melody."

A native of Brooklyn, Campenni has paid countless dues in local clubs. After two years on the street he brings a high degree of professionalism to his playing. "You really have to get control of your instrument," Mike explains. "The acoustics outside can fool you. You can be playing very loudly and not know it since there's no way to judge—there's nothing coming back to you. You want to play with intensity, but you have to be relaxed. It's easy to overblow on the outside. The sound disappears. It makes you very aware of dynamics."

To nail down their choice location, members of JBE will take turns getting to the park at 8:30 in the morning, four

hours ahead of the rest of the band. Campenni uses the time to practice and stare down onlookers. "I get there early with some coffee, and I set up my kit. That early, with my drums in the middle of the park—which is usually empty then—people look pretty strangely at me, like I dropped down from outer space. I just work on rudiments and look back at them straight in the eye."

POTS AND PANS IN THE EVERLASTING LAND

For years Duffy Square (in Times Square) has played host to a legion of entertainers. Fighting to be heard above the roar of traffic and ornery crowds, only the fittest survive. Where some have turned tail, Tony Walls has thrived. Asked why he returns to this spot to play as well as just hang out, he replies, "It's like the Hollywood of the East Coast. I love it."

This boisterous landscape seems tailor-made for this ingenious musician. Sweet and friendly, Tony is at turns naive and cocksure. Laying down an intoxicating groove on a totally original setup, he

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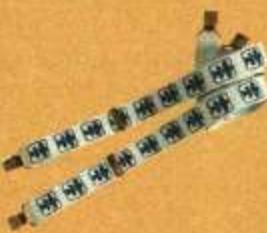
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plays and raps to a huge lunch-time audience with all the fervor of a Pentecostal preacher at a church revival. No long fills or useless soloing, this is about pure groove. Gut-level communication.

As embarrassed tourists come forward to drop dollar bills in a box and inquire of Tony's entourage about cassette tapes for sale, the drummer struts like he's playing Madison Square Garden. He plays the beat for a full twenty minutes, jumping up occasionally to rap or let out a "huh!" or "yeah!" As the crowd comes to believe in him, Reverend Tony becomes more intense, making his set rumble and quake by spinning off high-end trills.

"I'm taking the people to another world," says Tony. "When I entertain, I take everyone with me to the everlasting land. No kidding—I'm in another world. If you watch me, you'll get into me. We'll go up and up. We'll feel great at that moment." Tony says the idea for his setup came to him while he was sleeping. "I had a dream one night. When I used to play only drums in gospel groups, I always practiced doing two

things at once. Then the dream came to me, and here I am—buckets, pots, and pans." Moving left to right, Tony uses a plastic bucket and a deep snare drum to simulate the traditional bass drum/snare beat. With his left hand he plays both the bass drum and snare figures. Next to that are two large plastic buckets (which he pounds the sides of), mounted with big steel discs, like something off a railroad car. The discs, which he plays like cowbells or cymbals, produce a loud, penetrating tone. To his immediate right are up to six pots and pans of varying metals and dimensions. In Tony's hands they sound like birds, vibes, and bells rolled into one. Behind them are two refrigerator produce drawers sitting on metal grates. Thunder, rain, and lightning sounds come from here. Approaching Times Square from a side street, the setup sounds like a full percussion section interpreting James Brown & His Famous Flames. When Louie Bellson said the drums are an orchestra, I don't think he could have imagined this!

With his riveting beat and charismatic personality, Tony Walls has recorded with

Allyson Williams, Orange Juice Jones, and Bill Laswell. (The Laswell record, *Bahia Black*, was recently reviewed in *MD*.) He has also appeared in television commercials and videos. But he's not stopping there. "I'm looking right at the door, believe me. I want to make sure everything is together. When I knock on the door, I want to be prepared. I want to be able to draw a stadium-full. I'm a true artist. I'm a superstar already, I know it. The ability to touch people is something you've got to have naturally."

Tony, now twenty-five, began as a gospel drummer touring with artists like Jermaine Hawkins and the Violinaires. His brother, who plays "pure bucket" (a lone bucket, with lots of single-stroke rolls and rudiments mixed with a foot technique of lifting the bucket to get bass sounds), convinced Tony to play buckets, and he elaborated from there. "I want to be known for something different, and I'm doing it," he says. "I want to be a true pop entertainer. My style of talk-singing and the way I play set me apart. Somehow I've learned to satisfy the people. My fans make me do

istanbul

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what I do. If I make it with buckets, pots, and pans—which only cost a few dollars—that would be incredible."

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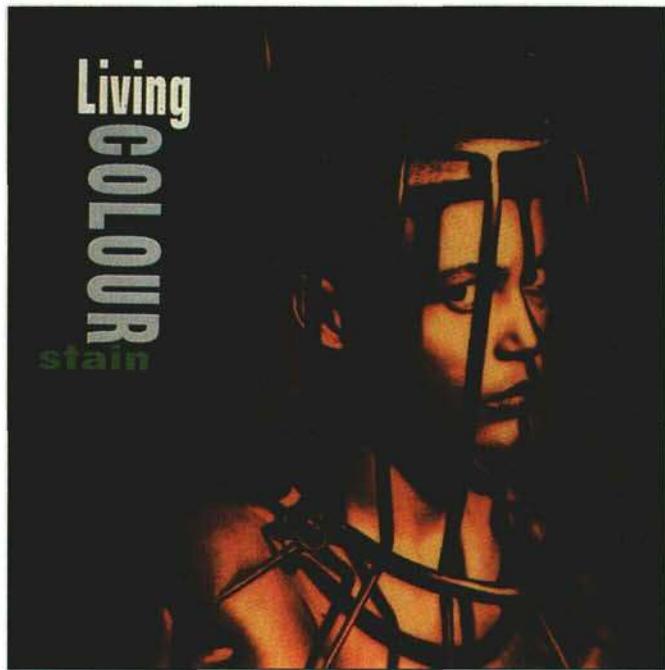


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RECORDINGS



LIVING COLOUR

Stain

Epic EK-52780

WILL CALHOUN: dr

VERNON REID: gtr

COREY GLOVER: vcl

DOUG WIMBISH: bs

Go Away; Ignorance Is Bliss; Leave It Alone; Bi; Mind Your Own Business; Auslander; Never Satisfied; Nothingness; Postman; WTFF; This Little Pig; Hemp; Wall

Living Colour is apparently tired of the buffet. After picking at, sampling, and dabbling in several musical styles since the late '80s, the New York foursome has decided to plant itself squarely—at least for the time being—atop hard-edged, bottom-ended rock. Propelled by a rejuvenated rhythm section, *Stain* rocks unabashedly from beginning to end.

New bassist Doug Wimbish has apparently had a profound effect on Will Calhoun's playing. For the most part—and to his credit—Calhoun sets his chops aside for the sake of a clean but fat groove, allowing

Wimbish room to kick loose and giving Vernon Reid the freedom to continue his trademarked warblings.

That's not to say Calhoun's effort is a boring one. Far from it. Will's tom-driven beat in the bridges of the Prong-like opening cut, "Go Away," set the tone for what proves to be a thoroughly infectious performance. And he catches every beat and throws in some tasty fills on the manic, tempo-shifting "This Little Pig," and shows off a bit of double-pedal proficiency on "Auslander" and the groovy "Wall."

But Calhoun makes an even greater impression by creating a pocket, rather than merely falling into one. Rarely have simple rock beats come off so lively. Wimbish's influence here is obvious, but a lot of the credit must go to Calhoun, who until now hadn't fully embraced the underrated art of delicious restraint.

• Matt Peiken

JOHN ABERCROMBIE

While We're Young

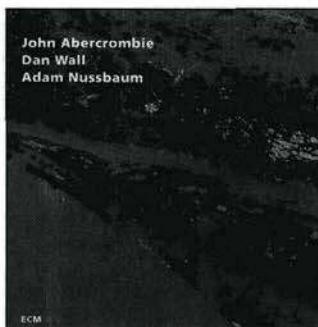
ECM1489

JOHN ABERCROMBIE: gtr

DAN WALL: organ

ADAM NUSSBAUM: dr

Rain Forest; Stormz; Dear Rain; Mirrors; Carol's Carol; Scomotion; A Matter Of Time; Dolorosa



If recorded output were always proportional to how in-demand a musician was, then Adam Nussbaum would be on about ten thousand albums. But for all the gigs he does with major artists in New York, Europe, and Japan, Nussbaum is seriously under-recorded. So it is particularly satisfying to have a new album's worth of tracks with which to enjoy his playing, especially as this trio format gives Adam plenty of space for expression.

Nussbaum's upbeat, gung-ho personality is perfectly reflected in the way his drumstick dances over his ride cymbal while his snare and bass drums offer spirited rhythmic commentary. It's an integrated style in which all elements contribute to forward momentum, but you can isolate either the drums or the cymbal and still get a complete musical statement.

While Nussbaum's playing has a strong bebop foundation, he is not merely recycling

phrases from Clarke, Roach, or assorted Joneses. There is a modern slant to his timekeeping, whether in the freedom of "A Matter Of Time," the straight-ahead groove of "Carol's Carol," or his ability to project pulse and color through the cymbal rolls and brush swirls in "Dear Rain." Mostly he provides a soulful swing that perfectly complements the guitar and Hammond organ.

• Rick Mattingly

DAEVID ALLEN AND KRAMER

Who's Afraid?

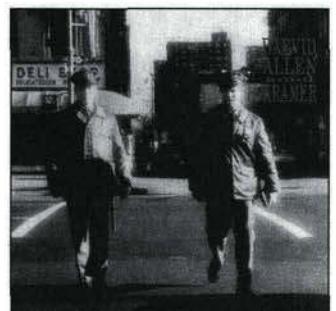
Shimmy Disc 060

DAEVID ALLEN: gtr, vcl

KRAMER: bs, gtr, kybd, fl, vcl

DAVID LICHT: dr, perc

Thinking Thoughts; Love; Who's Afraid; Shadow; Bopera III; Pretty Teacher; Call It Accident; Song For Robert; C'est La Maison; More & More; Quit Yr Bullshit



Original British beatnik/hippie and music maestro Daevid Allen has always been forward-looking, and this collaboration with American underground/independent mastermind Kramer proves that "psychedelia" doesn't have to be a dirty word in these trendy times.

With Allen's great sense of melody, phrasing, and mood and Kramer's command of space and sound, *Who's Afraid?* comes about as close to

the spirit of classic records like Pink Floyd's soundtrack to *More* and Gong's *Angel's Egg* as you're gonna get—yet without the nostalgia or retro-campiness so many others with similar goals fall into.

Drummer David Licht fits right into the affair, with his loose, flowing style the perfect match to the odd times and reverb-heavy, heavenly guitar sounds both Kramer and Allen favor. Kramer also employs a very "live" recording method, and Licht confidently tackles the improvised style this work ethic promotes. His cymbal work in particular is nicely varied, with lots of bell pings, broken China-cymbal smacks, and glancing blows *highlighting* rather than boldfacing every accent. He also gets good use of toms, and propels the music without always stating the rhythm. His military-ish snare work and hand-drumming also add the appropriate spice and mood.

With the recent profusion of young "neo-psychadelic" Dead-head wanna-be bands, it's refreshing to hear music by people who know that true revolution is in the grooves, not in the right haircut and tie-die tee. (*Shimmy Disc*, JAF Box 1187, New York, NY 10116, [718] 768-2424)

• Adam Budofsky

CHICK COREA

Three Quartets

GRP/Stretch STD-1103

CHICK COREA: *pno*

EDDIE GOMEZ: *bs*

STEVE GADD: *dr*

MICHAEL BRECKER: *sx*

Quartet No. 1; Quartet No. 3;

Quartet No. 2, Parts 1 and 2; Folk

Song; Hairy Canary; Slippery When

Wet; Confirmation

Chick Corea's 1982 release



Three Quartets is one of the strongest acoustic dates Corea has led, with Steve Gadd's phenomenal playing featured throughout. This reissue, on Corea's new Stretch Records, includes four previously unreleased tracks.

On "Quartet No. 2, Part 2" (which is dedicated to John Coltrane), Gadd starts out with a polyrhythmic solo that builds from simple snare rolls to an explosion. On the out chorus of the same song, he plays some of his trademark licks, including his by-now-classic triplets.

The four unreleased tracks feature more serious jazz soloing by Brecker and Corea, plus a fun version of "Slippery When Wet," which Corea had previously recorded with Roy Haynes. And the final track, a drum and saxophone duet, is a real treat, with Gadd reveling in being the sole sideman for a vintage Charlie Parker tune. This CD is a must-hear for Gadd and Corea fans.

• Adam Ward Seligman

COL. BRUCE HAMPTON & THE AQUARIUM RESCUE UNIT

Capricorn 9 42000-2

Col. Bruce Hampton: *vcl, gtr*

O. Burbridge: *bs, vcl*

Apt Q258: *dr, vcl*

Matt Mundy: *elec mandolin*

Jimmy Herring: *gtr*

Count Mbutu: *congas*

Chuck Leavell: *kybd*

Introduction; Fixin' To Die; Yield Not To Temptation; Working On A Building; Time Is Free; Basically Frightened; Compared To What; Time Flack; Davy Crockett; A Walk With Peltor; Jazz Bank; Quinius Thoth; Planet Earth



The first time around, I completely missed this disc. That's the problem with this kind of record: Due to radio format incompatibility, wildly original bands too often slip through the cracks, doomed to cult legend limbo. But don't let this one pass you by; we need bands like this *now*.

Released in early '92, this is one of the young decade's most refreshing, quirky surprises. Georgia's bluesy, growling vocalist/guitarist Bruce Hampton spins off bizarre lyrics in loose jazzy phrasings while the band cooks up an unpredictable mix of southern rock, blues, jazz, bluegrass, and funk. Dangerously armed with their chops, this quintet (plus two guest artists) is mercifully wise with their triggers: They deliver soulful, driving grit-and-groove rather than techno-exercises. It's deep—but damn fun, too. The choice to record their debut live in concert (except for one cut) attests to their fearlessness. Their sweaty, go-for-it stage hunger is palpable; it's what live albums *should* be about.

Drummer Apt. Q258 (?) and his bassist partner, post-

Jaco jazz/rocker Oteil Burbridge, are amazing young players who will no doubt be featured soon in instrumentalist magazines. Mr. "Q258" delivers powerful, great-feeling grooves and also offers an adventurous, spacey percussion improv ("A Walk With Peltor").

In this time of assembly-line records, it does my heart good to know that damn-the-torpedoes bands still manage to rear their defiant heads. Watch out.

• Jeff Potter

ZAKIR HUSSAIN

Zakir Hussain And The Rhythm Experience

Moment MRCD 1007

ZAKIR HUSSAIN, VINCE DELGADO, FAZAL QURESHI, RAY SPIEGEL, AUSHIM CHAUDHURI, DANA PANDEY, SYED ARSHAD: *perc* with NARADA MICHAEL WALDEN, MICKEY HART, and others

Balinese Fantasy; Lineage; Nines Over Easy; Rapanagatun; Triveni; Ryupak; Def And Drum; Rhythm Sonata In E Major

USTAD ALLA RAKHA AND ZAKIR HUSSAIN Tabla Duet

Moment MRCD 1001

USTAD ALLA RAKHA, ZAKIR HUSSAIN: *tabla*

RAMESH MISRA: *sarangi*

The Rhythm Experience is an intuitive multi-cultural ensemble founded by tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain, son of Ravi Shankar's venerable accompanist Ustad Alla Rakha. Revealing universality in the rhythms of India, Cuba, Africa, the Middle East, Indonesia, and the United States, the group balances beautiful juxtaposition, astounding technique, and infectious fun. Tabla and gongs call the world gamelan to order in "Balinese," and multiple tabla provide both

melody and harmony in "Nines" (featuring psychedelic phase-echo effects) and in "Rapanagatun" (where the classical tabla syllables are traded around the group rap-style over a sax-driven funk beat). And Narada Michael Walden dusts off his powerful kit chops on "Triveni."

Tabla Duet is an exhilarating 68-minute performance recorded live in Calcutta in 1991. The pure, breathing, ever-evolving conversation shifts and soars (the brilliant, Westernized prodigy reminding us that Papa still has plenty to say), spanning the generations and looking inward to the soul. (*Moment Records, 524 San Anselmo Ave., San Anselmo, CA 94960, [415] 459-6994*)

• **Hal Howland**

VIDEO

SIMON PHILLIPS RETURNS

DCI Music Video
641 Avenue Of The Americas
New York NY 10011
Time: 70 minutes
Price: \$39.95

SP Returns picks up right where Simon left off with his video release of last year (see October '92 *MD Critique*). In fact, this tape was recorded at the same time, so the format—along with the high-quality production—is very similar.

While DCI recommends this video for beginner- to pro-level drummers, the concepts presented here are not for the faint of heart—it's extremely advanced. Simon burns through original compositions, accompanied by Anthony Jackson, Ray Russell, and pre-recorded tracks, and then explains the patterns he plays during the songs. Many of these patterns incorporate

his massive kit (with *Octobans* and gong drum) and Simon's ability to ride with either hand. Mere mortals may have a hard time transferring these patterns to their own situations, but the inspiration is clear.

In other sections, Simon covers snare drum tuning and head selection, as well as his thoughts on practice. He then carefully and methodically demonstrates the hand exercises he prefers, allowing the viewer to understand what he's doing before he speeds them up to warp-drive tempi. A long, free-form solo is included that is simply tremendous.

Odd time signatures are discussed, but here Simon could have expanded his explanation to the approach he has for the concept. He plays along to pre-recorded tracks in 7/4, 5/4, 6/8, and what he describes as "a bit of madness," 33/8! Again, a bit more thorough explanation could have been helpful to the viewer, but even so it's just tremendous drumming. Simon Phillips is without question an artist at the top of his craft, and this video certainly proves it.

By the way, DCI is now offering book/CD educational packages that contain the songs (transcribed in the book, play-along audio tracks on the disc) for this and Simon's first video, at \$24.95 each. (A book/CD package is also available for Dennis Chambers' *Serious Moves* video, at \$21.95.) All are highly recommended for the advanced student.

• **William F. Miller**

BOOKS

ROCK STUDIES FOR DRUM SET

by James Morton

Mel Bay Publications, Inc.
#4 Industrial Drive
Pacific MO 63069

Price: Book, \$3.95; Cassette, \$9.98

One problem with teaching drumset to young students is keeping them motivated. Playing a one-measure pattern over and over can get boring real fast, but that's what they need to do in order to attain the necessary strength and coordination. Even when they understand that drummers typically have to hold a single beat for most of a three-minute song, that doesn't make practicing any more fun when they are sitting by themselves.

That's what makes material like *Rock Studies For Drum Set* so valuable. The tape contains ten different styles of rock that the student can play along with. Each track is presented twice: once with drums, to help get them started, and once without, so they can try it on their own. Rather than the cheesy synth tracks that similar packages have featured, James Morton wisely hired a live guitarist for his tape, and the screaming solos on several of the cuts should inspire even the most jaded thirteen-year-old.

The tape includes 8th-, 16th-, and quarter-note feels along with slow-triplet blues, funk, and shuffle styles. The accompanying book provides charts with basic beats and fills written out. The package seems designed to inspire rather than intimidate. There are a few slick licks here and there, but overall a student is likely to feel, "I can do that!" As a student's ability increases, the teacher can suggest

variations and applications that will make this material a valuable adjunct to a variety of drumset methods.

• **Rick Mattingly**

THE PERFORMING ARTS MAJOR'S COLLEGE GUIDE

by Corole J. Everett

Arco/Prentice Hall
15 Columbus Circle
New York NY 10023
Price: \$20

If you're a high-school student planning a college major in the fiercely competitive field of music, this book could represent the best-spent twenty bucks of your career. Written by Juilliard's director of admissions, the *Guide* covers everything from assessing your talent to surviving auditions.

Everett suggests you begin comparing colleges as early as your sophomore year. She gives detailed information on catalogs, campus visits, interview dos and don'ts, private-teacher searches, application and audition forms, financial aid, and other preliminaries. She profiles 250 colleges and conservatories in the U.S. and abroad, allowing you to weigh such factors as enrollment, faculty, deadlines, audition criteria, undergraduate and graduate degrees, costs, facilities, housing, and prominent alumni.

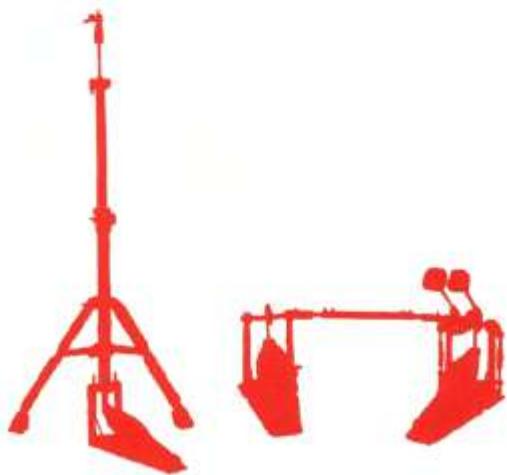
Especially useful is Everett's list of the most highly recommended schools, based on questionnaires returned by leaders in the field. Everett also provides a list of summer programs, a geographical index, a prudent look at alternative careers, a checklist for parents, a bibliography, and a list of professional organizations.

Disregarding a few old addresses and typos, this book is worth its weight in gold.

• **Hal Howland**

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The Dirty Dozen Brass Band's Lionel Batiste and Jenell Marshall

■ by Rick Mattingly

"When me and Lionel are playing together, it's like he's my feet and I'm his hands," says Jenell Marshall about the relationship between himself and Lionel Batiste, who make up the drum section of New Orleans' Dirty Dozen Brass Band. "We really shocked the Rolling Stones," Marshall continues. "We played for a party they gave in New Orleans, and Mick Jagger and Keith Richards were looking under the stage trying to find the drumkit. They couldn't believe what was happening. I was kind of proud of that."

Indeed, when witnessing the two drummers in action, one is struck by their ability to blend two different parts together to sound like a single player. At times, they incorporate cymbal and hi-hat sounds into their rhythms, giving the illusion of a drum-set. But their forte is the traditional New Orleans second-line drumming they do on just a snare drum, bass drum, and one cymbal. The basic pulse of each bar is the 1, the "&" of 2, and the 4, like the first bar of the 3/2 clave played over and over.

"The traditional beat that the older guys played was more laid-back," Batiste says. "We kind of upped the tempo a little bit to make the feet have to go faster. You can take that beat anywhere. We do it a little faster for the younger cats, and we play more laid-back for the older people. In New Orleans, a lot of little kids grow up to that beat. It's a rhythm that will make you move, guaranteed. If you're sitting down, laying down, in a wheelchair, paralyzed—you'll move some kind of way. It's a rhythm that will lift your spirits."

Which is exactly what second-line music is all about. It was originally performed by the band who followed the mourners in a funeral procession in an attempt to cheer them up. "Second-line is about having a party," Marshall

says. "You don't never want to be sad. Once you let the body go, it's all party. That's why we call New Orleans a party town. Every time you come there, everyone is happy and enjoying themselves, 24 hours around the clock."

"People who grow up to that music are attached to it," Batiste adds. "It would be hard for someone not from New Orleans to pick up on it, even if you were a drummer. It would take a while to get the feel. You have to come down here and check it out for yourself to get the groove."

And groove it does. Despite the fact that the music is being performed in a procession or parade, second-line music is meant to accompany dance rather than marching. "The people get their beat from the bass drum," Marshall says, "and that controls your feet. Every time that drum would beat you would move your body a different way, and you could just dance and shuffle around the street."

Batiste and Marshall say that some people confuse second-line with Dixieland, but there is a distinct difference. "Dixieland has instruments like banjo and piano, and the tuba is more of the 'oom-paa' style," Batiste says. "But a second-line is swing and dance," adds Marshall. "You can't really dance to Dixieland. That tuba is very strict and march-like. But if you listen to Dirty Dozen's tuba, he's swinging like an electric bass guitar, moving all over the place. It's still 4/4 time, but it has a swing."

Second-line is also distinct from Mardi Gras music. "When you speak of Mardi Gras," Marshall says, "you are speaking of Professor Longhair. He was the king of Mardi Gras, and most of what you hear there is his music. You'll also hear the Neville Brothers with things like 'Hey Pocky Way.'"

"The Neville Brothers, the Meters, Professor Longhair, Fats Domino, Lee Dorsey, Allan Toussaint—they really came out with a lot of funk and stuff," says Batiste. "At home, a lot of people are doing second-line off what they play. The Neville Brothers took a second-line beat and put some funk into it, but it's a New Orleans beat. You won't hear that beat nowhere else. You can tell a New Orleans drummer from an East Coast drummer or a West Coast drummer, because it's a different kind of feeling."

The bass drum Batiste keeps the second-line pulse on is a 14x22 of indeterminate ancestry. The lugs are mostly Ludwig on one side and Rogers on the other, with a couple of Slingerlands here and there. The shell is painted black, the rims bright blue. The primary batter head is a Remo Black Dot, while the other head, which Batiste

**"Second-line is
a rhythm that will
make you move,
guaranteed.
If you're sitting
down, laying
down, in a
wheelchair,
paralyzed—you'll
move some
kind of way."**





Photo by Rick Mattingly

sometimes plays on as well, is painted with the name of the band. The drum produces a very dry thud, obviously packed with something to deaden it. There is a large hole in the shell—which looks as though it could have been punched out with a screwdriver—that Batiste uses to hang his beater in when not in use.

Hearing Batiste live, one is struck by the dynamics in his playing—nuances that would be virtually impossible with a foot and a pedal. "This is more like playing a regular snare drum," Batiste says. "It's kind of awkward, but you get used to it. I play a lot of melody and offbeats and accents behind the horn section. Sometimes Jenell will keep the beat going, and I'll take off behind the horns, accenting the solo they're playing. Then I'll come back to the bass part. There is so much going on with the group that you can do what you want with the different rhythms and then fall back to the regular bass-line part."

A 13" K Zildjian hi-hat cymbal is screwed onto the left bass drum rim, which Batiste plays with a regular wood drumstick, unlike traditional second-line bass drummers, who usually strike the cymbal with a coathanger that has been bent into a circular shape. "I used to do that," Batiste says, "but I could only get a 'ching' sound that was more like a crash. I can change the sound more with a drumstick and make it sound like a hi-hat or use it as a crash or use it like a cowbell. I can also use the stick if I want to play on both sides of the drum."

To get the hi-hat "chick" effect, Batiste lays the stick across the cymbal the way one would do cross-stick snare drum clicks on a bossa nova. For cowbell effects he deadsticks the cymbal so that the impact produces a clang that is instantly muted by the

stick staying on the cymbal and killing the vibration. Sometimes he will play backbeats on the shell of the bass drum with that left-hand stick.

Marshall does the bulk of his playing on a Ludwig 5x14 *Aerolite* snare drum that hangs from a sling around his neck. For occasional tom-tom effects he has an ancient six-lug 5x14 blue-sparkle Gretsch snare drum perched on a tall concert snare drum stand. The snares have been removed and there are strips of masking tape on both heads, giving an extremely muted sound. On each side of the Gretsch drum is a suspended crash cymbal.

But the bulk of his playing is done on that single snare drum. "Sometimes it can be hard to just play on the snare drum," he admits, "but I'm used to it. A lot of times, I just use my cymbal hand on the drum the same way as if I were playing the cymbal."

Dynamics are extremely important to Marshall, who combines loud accents, ghost notes, and "regular" notes into a part that has a great deal of rhythmic shape. Often, when playing a second-line beat, he'll hit the same accents as the bass drum with the right hand while filling in ghost-note 8ths with the left. Other times he'll essentially play a shuffle rhythm hand-to-hand, popping out syncopated accents to create a rhythmic line. The resulting sound resembles a shuffle played on hi-hat with snare drum accents over it. On occasion, he will play a similar pattern using brushes with the snares turned off. The accented notes are played as rimshots with the handles of the brushes.

Although Marshall uses his cymbals primarily for crashes, he

will sometimes ride on one of them in the traditional way. But he seldom does that for an entire piece. On a song called "Me Like It Like That," Marshall plays the A sections of the tune with both hands on muted snare drum, then goes to ride cymbal with snare drum backbeats for the B sections—providing a nice contrast of colors. "I added the cymbals about eleven or twelve years ago to get some different sounds," Marshall explains. "I used to use the cymbal on top of Lionel's bass drum, but that got to be a hassle. So I rigged up a couple of cymbals because Dirty Dozen does more than second-line music now. We'll tackle anything."

While Dirty Dozen's repertoire includes R&B such as "Night Train," bop tunes like "Blue Monk," and novelty numbers such as the theme from *The Flintstones*, that second-line influence and feel is always evident. Some bands take traditional music and give it a contemporary approach; Dirty Dozen plays modern music with a traditional approach. It's one Lionel and Jenell literally grew up with.

"My father played bass drum," Batiste says. "He and my uncles used to play all the time and I'd listen to them. When there would be a parade, all the kids would follow it, and when the parade was over and they put the instruments down, we'd go grab the drums and beat on them every chance we got. That's what I did when I was three years old."

Marshall recalls a couple of the drummers who influenced him: "There was a drummer named Noel Glass, who played

with the Eureka Brass Band, and his son, Noel Glass, Jr., who was in the Olympia Brass Band with a guy we called Old Man Trotter, who played snare drum. I never did know his first name, but he taught me a lot. I used to get right alongside them and follow them and listen to them play. They were my idols.

"In my neighborhood in the 6th ward," Marshall continues, "everybody wanted to be a drummer. But nobody could afford instruments, so everybody would play on a garbage can or something. For a horn section, everybody would be playing kazoos. We'd have about 20 drummers beating on garbage cans, and two kazoos," he laughs.

The two drummers grew up playing with various groups, and sometimes played together in New Orleans Indian bands such as the White Eagles. Batiste joined the Dirty Dozen first, along with another drummer. Marshall, meanwhile, was gigging with such groups as the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, the Pete Fountain Half-Assed Marching Band, and the Olympia Brass Band. Eventually, he joined Batiste in Dirty Dozen.

"The second-line bands started out as a funeral thing," Marshall explains, "but as the years went by, people would hire the bands for parties and picnics and baseball games. Some of the bands, like Dirty Dozen, used to get together and party around the neighborhood just to have something to do, because there wasn't much work for the young cats like us. So we used to play just for the fun of it."

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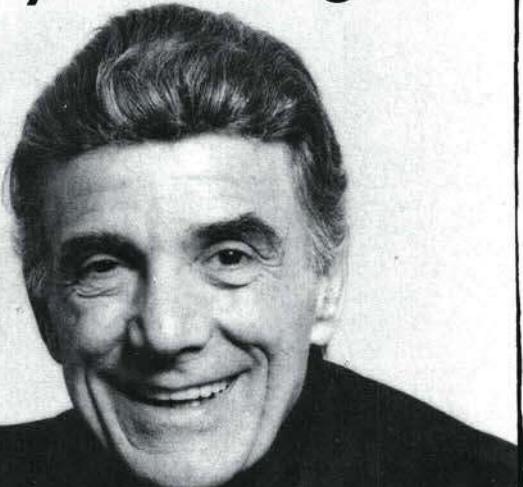
"It's still that way for the kids. There's a band called the Little Rascals, who range in age from seven to ten, and they play every day in the [French] Quarter. They started just like we did, playing around the neighborhood. Second-line really has grown. Thanks to the Dirty Dozen, a lot of the young kids, like the Re-Birth Brass Band, are keeping it up. It was really dying out until we came along and changed it by taking other kinds of music and putting it on the street. A lot of the bands were saying that it wouldn't work, but we took it to the streets and everybody enjoyed it.

"Now we're one of the older bands in the city," Marshall laughs. "Back when we started out, most of the second-line bands were in the 6th ward, which is where Bourbon St. and most of the clubs are. Now it's all over the city; everybody has a second-line. I heard that recently somebody had a second-line funeral for their dog—and it turned out to be big. So second-line is very alive in New Orleans, and it's going to be around for a long time."

And it's becoming popular around the world, as well, largely due to the Dirty Dozen, who tour extensively throughout the U.S. and overseas. But for all of the tradition that they are keeping alive, it's been a long time since the band actually played a funeral. "The only time we would do a funeral now is if a musician would die," Marshall says, "and we were home. But we rarely are home; we do about 290 days a year of traveling. Our home is on the road."



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Keith DeArmond Builds His Drum Booth

■ by Rick Mattingly

"I had the same problem most drummers have," says Keith DeArmond, road manager for blues/rock musician Delbert McClinton and drumming enthusiast. "How was I going to practice drums without driving the people around me nuts? Guitar players have those little Walkman-size practice amps with headphones, and keyboard players can plug headphones into their instruments. But drumset is a whole different story. You either have to live with deaf people or

people who are very patient—or else you have to bribe them to go take a drive.

"My first advice to drummers would be to get a ground-floor or basement apartment," Keith suggests, "where you would be sitting on a solid concrete slab and wouldn't have to worry about having anyone underneath you." DeArmond, though, lived in a *third-floor* apartment. "I had neighbors underneath and beside me," he says. "So it was a real problem, though I did have a great view of downtown Nashville. Actually, if it had been an older building, it wouldn't have been so bad, because the walls would have been constructed of solid plaster. But most of the apartment buildings that have been put up over the past twenty years have virtually no insulation in the walls—just one thin layer of sheetrock."

Keith's solution was to isolate his drums by building a booth around them. "I have to emphasize that this is not a *sound-proof* booth," he says. "It's a *sound-reducing* booth. But it still works fine. After it was in place I checked it with a dB meter, and the volume that

came out of it while I was playing my drums was comparable to the volume of a TV set or stereo system playing at a normal level. My neighbors below me can sometimes hear the vibration from the bass drum, but it isn't any louder than the sound of someone walking across the floor."

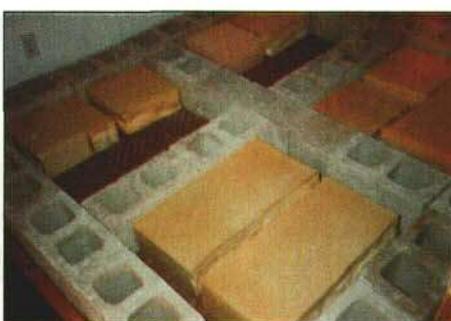
Keith had discovered early on that getting the bass drum vibrations to that manageable level was his biggest challenge. "High-end sounds, such as cymbals, don't cut through," DeArmond explains. "And the booth wouldn't be attached to the walls, so vibrations wouldn't be transferred through them. But it would obviously sit on the floor, and vibrations from the bass drum pedal would get through."

DeArmond had one consideration that other drummers might not be concerned with. "My drums were in the living room," he says, "and I considered them a showpiece, just like a grand piano that you might see in a lot of people's homes. So I wanted my booth to look attractive."

A final consideration that many drummers will be able to relate to, however, concerned budget. "I couldn't afford to just go out and buy a lot of materials," DeArmond admits. "But with some imagination and luck, you can come up with a lot of materials at a reasonable



After the entire floor was double-layered with carpet and padding, a foam layer was added for the area of the booth itself. Concrete blocks were then arranged to form the foundation.



The spaces between the blocks were filled to eliminate "reverberation chambers."



This pedestal-style bed frame was itself completely carpeted before it became the floor for the booth.



Wall panels for the booth were first framed and lined with Styrofoam insulation...

price. You can find a lot of great stuff at Goodwill, Disabled American Veterans, or Salvation Army stores."

Keith's first acquisition fell into the "luck" category. "I needed some carpeting," he explains. "The apartment already had a carpet with a pad underneath, but I wanted to put another layer of padding and carpet over that, because doing that can really cut the vibrations down a lot.

"One day I noticed a couple of carpet trucks parked in front of a motel. I drove around to the back and found a whole dumpster full of old carpeting and pads that were being replaced. So I was able to get all I needed without paying a cent. That's not something you can count on finding exactly when you need it, but if you keep your eyes open you might be lucky."

Once he had his extra layer of padding and carpet in place, DeArmond needed something to elevate the eventual floor of the booth so that it wouldn't be resting directly on the floor of his apartment. He tried various materials, first using 4x4 blocks of wood. But he found that the vibrations were still able to travel through them to his apartment floor.

"I was thinking how I wouldn't have that problem if I were on the ground floor on a solid cement slab," DeArmond

says. "So I decided to try to duplicate that effect by hauling a thousand pounds of cinderblock up three flights of stairs and building a frame that the booth could rest on. I then covered the blocks with hospital bedding foam so that the floor of the booth would be isolated from the cinderblocks."

The idea worked reasonably well, but since that time DeArmond has realized that he went a bit far. "I used about twenty blocks, making a complete square around the perimeter of the booth with a cross in the middle. But I've discovered that you don't need nearly that many. You just need a few of them to elevate the platform. In fact," he adds, "you could even substitute milk crates, which are a heck of a lot lighter. Of course, the blocks are a little more stable."

Before putting the floor of the booth over the cinderblock framework, DeArmond filled the open area with insulating material. "I didn't want to create a resonating chamber," he explains. "Bass soundwaves will go forever, and you need to trap them. I used some old blankets, though you can get used mattresses pretty cheap from Goodwill stores, and that would do a good job, too. Of course, if you really want to trap them, you could build a baffle out of sheets of plywood."

Keith found the eventual floor of his

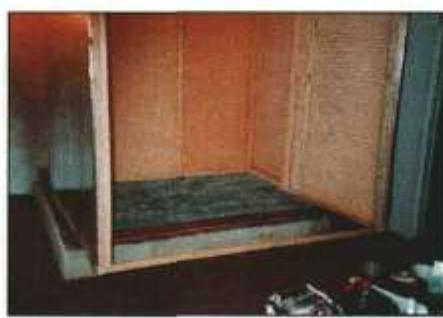
booth at a thrift shop as well. "I bought a used queen-size platform bed frame from a Disabled American Veterans store for thirty-five bucks," he says. "Of course, you could just get some sheets of plywood and build one in whatever size you want. The queen-size worked well for my double-bass kit as long as I used a rack system so that I wouldn't have tripod cymbal-stand legs all over the place." The floor of the booth was covered with yet another layer of carpeting.

When it came time to build the walls and ceiling, DeArmond decided to make them in sections, so that the booth could be easily taken down and reassembled. "I used 2x2's to make a framework," he says. "You could use 2x4's, but they're actually heavier than you need. Each of my sections ended up being 3' 3" x 6'1/2". To assemble the booth, I just put screws through the adjoining 2x2's to hold them together.

"I started off by stapling sheets of bedding foam to the frame. Behind that I put a layer of the Styrofoam insulation that is used underneath exterior siding on houses. Then I put in a layer of the 2"-thick insulation that's used in recording studios [Owens-Corning 700 series fiber glass]. Over all that I put sheetrock. Finally, I took 6" board stock and framed the booth out so it would look better. I



...then lined with foam to further absorb sound inside the booth.



This view shows the foundation, floor, and walls of the booth. (The upper section has not yet been moved back into alignment with the floor.)



The finished booth, including the clear Plexiglas front panels

put a door in the back corner so I could get in and out. I built my own frame. I just doubled up on the wood and hinged it separately."

And what about ventilation? "That wasn't a problem," DeArmond replies, "because I didn't caulk around where the panels went together, so air could get through. To help out, I cut a small hole in the sheetrock and mounted a four-inch exhaust fan, which did a fine job of drawing air through."

As mentioned before, looks were important to DeArmond, since he didn't want a big, wooden box sitting in his living room. So for the front of the booth, instead of building wall panels as described above, he used four sheets of *Plexiglas*. "I was lucky there," he says, "because someone gave me the *Plexiglas*. If I had to buy it, it would have added about \$400 to the cost. But a lot of people wouldn't need to use it at all, or they could simply have one panel as a window instead of using it for the entire front." To complete the effect, DeArmond added lighting.

"Again," Keith points out, "this isn't an elaborate, sound-proof booth, but it does the job in terms of making it possible for me to practice in my apartment, and it didn't cost me very much. I bought this stuff a few years ago, so the prices have probably gone up, but to give you an idea, I got six sheets of sheetrock for \$16, and six queen-size sheets of bedding foam

for about \$90.

"I spent about \$140 for the Corning insulation, but that stuff is great. It's so dense that you can stand on it. At one point, I took my car jack, lifted up the entire booth a side at a time, and put a sheet of that insulation over the cinderblock frame—so that the entire floor of the booth was resting on it. If you're not limited to dumpsters and Goodwill stores, I would recommend it, because it's actually made for use in recording studios."

In fact, DeArmond got a bit of financial help for that particular insulation. "My apartment manager was so happy that I was being conscientious about not bothering the neighbors that she knocked fifty dollars off my rent one month to go towards the cost of the insulation. Things had gotten to the point that if I couldn't make the booth work, I was going to have to move, and she didn't want to lose a good tenant."

DeArmond stresses that anyone wishing to reduce the sound of his or her drumset doesn't have to exactly duplicate what he did. "My point in wanting to share my experience with *Modern Drummer* readers is to give people some ideas. Obviously, if you have a lot of money, you can build something more substantial than I did. But even if you're on a budget, you can come up with something that works. For example, instead of using all that bedding foam and Corning insulation, you can line the interior of the booth with carpeting and padding, which you might be lucky enough to get free if you can find someone who's disposing of their old carpeting. You can sometimes pick up old parachutes cheap at army surplus stores, and they can be used underneath the booth to help keep sound waves from bouncing around under there. You can use whatever materials you have access to. Any kind of material that absorbs sound can help."

"And," continues DeArmond, "you can build your booth whatever size you want. I built mine to fit the queen-size platform bed frame and the sheets of *Plexiglas* I was given, but you could use a king-size or regular double-bed frame—depending on the size of your kit—or just use sheets of plywood."

DeArmond has plans to eventually build another booth—this time incorporating a heavier framework that can serve as both the support for the wall panels and as a super drum rack from which cymbals and accessories can be hung. "It's really a labor of love—or maybe a love of labor," he laughs. "Spend some time and use your imagination. Treat it like a scavenger hunt. When you love playing drums, you're willing to go to any extent to be able to play."

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ZILDJIAN DRUMSTICKS

continued from page 37

back for those multiple buys."

Randy Raper puts it succinctly: "As the endorser base has grown, the sales figures in the standard lines have also grown, so that tells the tale."

Can the Zildjian team be as open to ideas, complaints, or problems from "drummers on the street" as they are to their endorsers? Replies John DeChristopher, "We wouldn't be as successful as we are now if we hadn't listened to consumers. Right from the very beginning, when we were buying our sticks, we knew that there was a problem with the design of the bread-and-butter 5Bs and 5As: The necks were too thin. When we took over this facility, we modified those models just enough to add durability but retain the balance and feel. We did it because we listened to the complaints of the users."

Lanny Marsh adds, "Another example is the changes we've made in our logo. We started with a logo that was very small, and then went to a big logo that wrapped around the stick. It had five

times as much ink on it as the previous logo, and we had complaints from drummers about the ink smearing their hands. This will vary with the acids in the perspiration of different people. So we've tested eight or nine different inks, and I've sent sticks to some of the people who complained so they could test our solutions. We've come to one ink that seems to have little or no smearing at all.

"A lot of customer service involves some guidance," continues Lanny. "We answer seven to ten letters a month from people who claim that their sticks broke within the first five minutes. We don't argue with them. But what we do do is encourage them to try a bigger model. I have never gotten back a second negative letter from anyone we've done that with. The Super 5B was the first of four or five sticks that suddenly positioned us well with alternative models for people who just weren't happy with the standards."

Making sure to meet consumer needs is a key element of drumstick development—as well as crucial to successful marketing. Lanny describes Zildjian's current philosophy in this regard. "Every

company has a core of model size ranges," he says. "There's the 5A-and-smaller range, and the 5B range, and then the .Rock-and-larger range. If somebody wanted something not quite as fat as a Rock stick, we used to have to move them down to a 5B. The shaft was right, but the neck wouldn't hold up and they'd be breaking sticks. Now, the Super 5B shaft is very close to that of the regular 5B—but not as thick as that of the Rock—and the neck is thicker. We've put these other models in for people who want to change: They can move up in shaft to Rocks, or move laterally to a Super 5B or some of our Artist Series sticks. A Super 5A has a shaft equivalent to a 5B, but with a narrower taper and an acorn tip. Thus a Super 5A is in the 5B durability and feel range, but it bounces more—like a 5A would be expected to."

"Those are the ways we've listened to consumers," says Lanny. "We've really widened the line out. I won't kid you; most of our input comes from our endorsers. But you find out that if they use a particular stick for the music they play, some kids out there who are trying

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A good question. After all, the shell is the most contributing factor in drum sound.

In the 50's and 60's, most drum shells were of thin wall construction with a reinforcement ring glued inside the shell at each end. They needed the reinforcement ring to keep the thin shells round and stable. That worked fine in those days, as most music then was acoustic Jazz and Swing which didn't require high volume and heavy hitting.

With the advent of electrified Beat and Rock music, higher volume and attack requirements led drum manufacturers to offer thicker, more massive shells, suggesting that "more mass means more power". However, this is generally not true. Besides, the thicker the shell, the higher its pitch. When you get into larger toms and bass drums, this is definitely not desirable.

Nowadays, we have a multitude of approaches. Surveying them, we found a problem with reinforced shells: the

outer edge, being thicker, resonates differently from the middle of the shell, which is less than optimal for the overall sound. Also, these shells have far greater inconsistencies in pitch, forcing drum manufacturers to match shell pitches in a set. But, what do you do if you want to order an add-on drum and live 2000 miles away? There is also a trend to offer shells in different thicknesses around the kit. The problem about thicker shells having a higher pitch in larger sizes, however, is simply not addressed in that principle.

Our desire was to create a drum shell that would address all these problems and perform well in today's most versatile musical environment. Extensive testing revealed that an

8-ply shell with no reinforcement ring offers the best pitch consistency and performs best. We chose maple wood, as it has the best combination of sonic qualities, balancing attack with warmth. The shell, being all maple and uniform in thickness top to bottom, resonates as a whole. It is thin enough to respond to

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to play in a similar manner will be interested in that stick. It helps and guides them, actually."

"In the past three years," adds John DeChristopher, "we've taken the range from eighteen models to thirty-nine. In addition to our hickory drumset sticks, we also offer the laminated-maple *lan Wallace* model, a solid-maple orchestral stick called the *Crescendo*, and a variety of marching sticks. We've finally grown to the point where we can even do some customized things for certain artists that we don't even put on the market. At the end of the day, that's what you want: to keep everybody happy."

PRODUCTION

Zildjian's Tuscaloosa Timber factory is a 20,000-square-foot plant situated on eight acres. The capacity of this plant is about a million and a half pairs of sticks per year, or somewhere around five to six thousand a day. The plant employs forty-six people and runs two shifts.

The yard area is used for storing and drying the supply of raw lumber that comes from several mills in the general vicinity. Good lumber is critical to good drumsticks, so plant manager Randy Raper works closely with his suppliers, instructing them on precisely what is wanted. The reason for working with more than one mill is to assure a steady supply of lumber.

"One intangible advantage to having our plant in the South," says Lanny

Marsh, "is the networking that can be done between Randy and our wood-supply mills. If we hear from one of the mills that they may have a problem meeting our order, Randy gets in the pickup truck and pays them a visit. That's the relationship-building capability that being in this area gives us. We have the luxury of being within driving distance of all of our suppliers, and that translates to a finished product that has the consistency we want because the wood supply is consistent from the very first stage."

To help ensure that consistency, each batch of wood from a given mill is identified with a code. "We follow that batch right through the production process," says Randy Raper. "That way, if a problem with the sticks turns up that relates to the wood itself, we can trace it back to the original source and correct the problem."

Dealing with the raw lumber involves more than just stacking it up prior to cutting it, as Randy explains. "As soon as you cut a log, moisture starts to leave immediately—by the most expedient route. That's from the end grain and the outside exposed surfaces. As a result, the outside of the wood dries first, leaving the inside core still wet. That's when you start having warpage problems. So we separate the stacked lumber with sticks, which allows air to get to every bit of the wood so it dries from the outside and the inside. This also prevents the wood from warping in the sun, which would happen if we just laid the boards out in the air by themselves."

"We air-dry the wood down to about a 15% to 20% moisture content. That allows us to dry it further in our kiln in a minimum amount of time. Air-dried stock takes five days to dry; if we put it in wet it may take ten or twelve. Our 25,000-board-foot dehumidification dry kiln works with a heat pump, which dries the wood evenly at a low temperature and maintains its color. Hickory that dries at high temperatures may discolor. Wood that dries too fast can encounter a variety of physical defects because the cells collapse when the moisture leaves. And wood that isn't dried consistently might mean sticks with different moisture contents on a dealer's shelf. Over time, a stick with a high moisture content may

warp."

After the wood is kiln-dried to a moisture content of 6% to 7%, it's run through a planer to create boards of $7/8$ " thickness. Those boards are then cut to lengths of approximately $16\frac{3}{4}$ ", because most of Zildjian's sticks fall under that length. An eight-bladed gang saw then cuts the boards into $7/8$ " x $7/8$ " blanks. These blanks are then turned into $3/4$ " dowels on another machine. "We can run about 25,000 dowels per day through each of our two machines," comments Randy. "We run them at .750" plus or minus ten thousandths of an inch. The operator does a check every hour to determine if the size is changing in any way. Inconsistencies in dowel size create problems further down the line, so we take steps to eliminate them."

After the dowels have been produced, they are inspected for any cosmetic or structural imperfections and also rolled for straightness before any further work is done on them. (One grader has been on the job since the plant opened, and Randy calculates that she has graded over fourteen million dowels!) After the dowels are graded, they go to the shaping machines.

It is in the area of stick shaping that Zildjian's process differs from those of most other stick manufacturers. Where others cut their sticks on lathes, Zildjian has chosen to employ a grinding process. As Randy explains, "We have two machines, each of which has a stone grinding wheel with half of the contour of a stick cut into it. Our operators grind the butts on one machine, then transfer the blanks to the other machine and grind the heads. There's a different grinding wheel for the contour of each drumstick model."

The dimensions of the sticks being ground are continually monitored in order to check for stone wear. Every hour, the butts, shafts, and tips of four sticks are measured and compared to control limits. According to Randy, "The sticks are usually consistent to within one or two thousandths of an inch."

Randy explains Zildjian's choice of stone grinding wheels over other methods of manufacture. "One of the features of hickory," he says, "is that any time you put stress on it, it will take some of the

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shape you're forcing it into. In other words, if you're bending it, it won't want to straighten back out entirely; it will retain some of that bend. With grinding stones, you have even pressure on both sides of the stick as it's being shaped, and that pressure is distributed over an eight-inch area. So the outcome is a straight stick every time. We certainly don't maintain that our way is right and anyone else's is wrong, but we do think this is a good way to make a drumstick."

Economics also enter into Zildjian's choice of methods, as Randy explains. "We may use a stone for a couple of runs of anywhere from 8,000 to 16,000 sticks before we have to even consider refacing it. We've been running some stones for years. Unless a stone gets dirty, you really don't have to resurface it. Its profile changes at a much slower rate per volume than does the sharpness of a lathe knife."

Is stone-grinding as flexible a method as lathing, in terms of new model development? Is it harder to come up with new prototypes and make changes on a stone?

"We won't make a new stone right away," replies Lanny Marsh. "When we get a request for a new stick shape, we'll try to approximate it from the closest existing stone we have. Very often it boils down to a shaft from one model and a tip from another. We may then have to sand it or do some hand-shaping to achieve the first prototype shape. Once we've worked through the necessary modifications to reach the final prototype, then we'll make a new production template, and from that we'll create a new stone."

On nylon-tipped stick models, the tips are pressed onto the ends of the sticks after an impact-resistant glue has been applied. Every hour, five sticks are checked on a pull-test machine. Says Randy, "The tipped sticks must meet our minimum straight-pull test figure of 150 pounds before the tips pull off. Most of our *Rock*, *Super 5B*, and similar models will hold in a range of from 300 to 500 pounds."

After the sticks are ground, they are inspected again, then put into tumblers with a mixture of acetone and lacquer. When they come out, they're sorted and

inspected yet again. Explains Randy, "A lot of cosmetic defects show up after the lacquer is applied."

Lacquered sticks are passed through a straightness tester. Randy describes the process. "We have a microswitch set on a point between two wheels. As a stick rolls on the wheels, the switch can detect any deviation much more accurately than an inspector could by rolling it. If the machine detects any wobble in the stick, it kicks the stick out."

Sticks verified as straight are next sorted according to weight. "We have weight standards set for every one of our models," says Randy. "We have a mean weight, and a standard deviation of two points below that. Sticks that wind up in the bottom bin of the sorting machine are actually too light, and they're rejected. Other than that, the sticks in each sorting box along the machine are within four grams of each other. It's amazing to think that our sorting machine—which looks like an old-fashioned farm-style egg sorter—works so well, but I've checked the results myself."

Finally, the sticks are buffed and imprinted with a hot-type, pressure-sensitive logo. Operators spray each logo with a fixative to make sure it adheres well. Then the sticks are given a final inspection before being bagged, boxed, and shipped.

It is at that final inspection that some sticks are determined to be structurally sound, but to have minor cosmetic flaws. It seems wasteful to completely reject such sticks, so they are stained a golden color and sold at a reduced price under the "Power Pro" brand name. "Having a line like this helps us keep the first-quality stick line in check," says John DeChristopher. "Rather than waffling on whether or not to put a questionable stick into the Zildjian first-quality line, having the Power Pro series as a home for that stick gives us a way to avoid that temptation. And at the same time, we serve a niche in the market that needs sticks priced at that level—which is a big niche."

Zildjian is especially keen on the matter of quality control and brand image. "We have visual comparison charts and examples all through the plant," says

Lanny Marsh, "so that our operators can see the differences between a good stick and a flawed stick. We also show our grader sticks from our competitors, with the admonition that we want ours to be as good or better. We also have a date code on the outside of each box of finished sticks. If a dealer gives us the code, we can pin down exactly when the sticks were made. This, in turn, allows us to investigate any problems with those sticks."

And what happens when the company does hear about problems? "When retailers tell us there's a problem," says Lanny, "we like them to send the sticks back to us. We can tell if they've been played in a reasonable way or an abusive way. If they snapped right away—we replace them, free. We're very generous with replacing sticks, even if it's a marginal situation." Randy Raper adds, "I've gotten sticks back from Lanny and John that were actually *sawed in two* from rimshots, and they have replaced them."

"The way we look at it," concludes John DeChristopher, "drummers like that are going to break *anybody's* sticks. We would rather they be our customers."



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In Memoriam: Bobby LaKind

This past Christmas Eve, Doobie Brothers percussionist Bobby LaKind passed away after a year-long bout with colon cancer.

LaKind had lived a lot in his forty-seven years. After receiving a degree in law from the University of Maryland, he decided to follow a different path, eventually landing a job with the Doobies as roadie. During a gig three days after he had joined the band on the road, a flash pot exploded in LaKind's face, and he was rushed to the hospital. He was back at work the next day, though—wrapped like a mummy—and subsequently raised his crew-member status from anonymous to notorious.

Soon after, Bobby was promoted to stage manager, at which time Doobies guitarist Patrick Simmons first heard him actually play percussion. It wasn't long before LaKind was playing on a couple of songs live and on the 1976 album *Takin' It To The Streets*. Bobby continued recording with the band as a sideman through 1977's *Living On The Fault Line* and 1978's *Minute By Minute*, and eventually attained full-fledged membership in the band in 1980.

In a 1989 interview, Bobby told me that *Fault Line* was his favorite recorded work. "I think we kind of broke ground on that record," Bobby recalled. "The music was a little more thoughtful. I always had a good time playing on Doobies records, though. They were real rhythmic and lent themselves to percussion." Through the years, LaKind would also do sessions with Chris Hillman, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Michael McDonald, and Little Feat.

Today, former Doobies drummer Keith Knudsen recalls what it was like playing with Bobby. "Bobby was a great percussionist to play with. He had great time and great ideas; when we were recording, we'd come up with a drum pattern and he'd come up with something that fit perfectly."

"We were a real simple team," Knudsen continues. "It's hard for a lot of players to play consistently simple, but he could do that. He was really a part of the Doobies rhythm section sound for all those years, and part of that was his ability to find that spot that wasn't covered by any of the other rhythm section instruments—and stick with it throughout the song without having to be a virtuoso."

Knudsen, who helped LaKind put his affairs in order in anticipation of the percussionist's passing, also helped arrange two Doobie Brothers reunion concerts to start a trust fund for Bobby's two young boys, Nicky and Cutter. The shows, which LaKind actually played in, raised over \$75,000.

• Robyn Flans

Camps And Clinics

Drummers Collective has created a new ethnic percussion division, which will offer a full program of weekly classes. Contact the school at (212) 741-0091.

Teikyo Westmar University in LeMars, Iowa has announced that its new **Clark Terry International Institute of Jazz Studies** will open September, 1994. Terry will serve as Artistic Director of the Institute, which will be incorporated into the school's music department. A degree in jazz performance will now be available through the Institute, and scholarship auditions will begin this September and

continue throughout the 1993-'94 year. For more information, call Melanie Patterson or Joyce Allard at (712) 546-2030.

Mapex Percussion, in conjunction with the Stanford University Jazz Workshop, will be sponsoring a **Billy Cobham Master Class** program on August 12, 13, and 14. Mapex is making available a number of free full scholarships to the classes, including travel and lodging. To be eligible, drummers must submit a cassette tape of their original solo to Mapex-Jupiter Marketing, P.O. Box 90249, Austin, TX 78709-0249, or contact an authorized Mapex dealer for more information.

Northern Illinois University will host the NIU **Jazz Camp** Sunday, June 20 through Saturday, June 26. The camp is open to all students who have completed grades 8-12 (including graduating seniors) and who play drums or a number of other instruments. Campers will perform in two ensembles, take classes in jazz theory, and attend master classes, clinics, and faculty concerts. For more information, call Deborah Booth at (815) 753-1450 or write: External Programs, College of Visual and Performing Arts, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115.

Yamaha's Sounds of Summer Drumset Workshop series will be held at four sites this year. The workshops, which will be conducted by Steve Houghton, Gary Chaffee, Bob Breithaupt, and Guy Remonko, will include lessons, classes, listening sessions, and videotaped performance opportunities. Dates and locations are as follows: June 13-17, Capital University, Conservatory of Music, Columbus, OH 43209, (614) 236-6234; July 11-15, University of North Texas, College of Music, Denton, TX 76203, (817) 565-3714; July 18-22, Arizona State University, School of Music, Tempe, AZ 85187, (602) 965-3549; and July 25-29, University of Colorado, College of Music, Boulder, CO 80309, (303) 666-4387.

The Cape Drummers Association sponsored a clinic featuring Alex Acufia with Abe Laboriel and Justo Almario this past January 26 in Cape Town, South Africa.

Indy Quickies

Music Makers Unlimited is a non-profit organization designed to provide musical opportunities for persons with physical and learning disabilities. For more information, write to Music Makers Unlimited at P.O. Box 2085, Bothell, WA 98041-2085, (206) 481-3973.

In Percussive Arts Society news, a Forum for Drumset Education and Performance has been founded. Through the Forum, drumset performers, teachers, and students will have the opportunity to share ideas on teaching, performing,

and learning. *Percussive Notes*, the PAS publication, will include Forum articles on related subjects. The Forum will also sponsor drumset education seminars, collect curricula from prominent percussion departments and teachers, and strengthen communication between private and academic drumset instructors. For more information, contact Ed Soph, College of Music, University of North Texas, Box 13887, Denton, TX 76203-3887, tel: (817) 565-2791, fax: (817) 565-2002.

PAS has also announced its 1993-'94 Executive Committee: Dr. Garwood Whaley, president; Randy Eyles, first vice-president; Genaro Gonzalez, second vice-president; Robert Breithaupt, secretary; and Michael Balter, treasurer.

William F. Ludwig has been named to the Bands of America Board of Directors.

Congratulations to **Mike's Drum**

Shop, in Santa Barbara, California, on their twenty-fifth anniversary.

And a belated salute to George Hamilton Jr., former owner of **The Drum Shop** in Detroit, Michigan (now Trudell's Drum Shop). At the time of its sale in May of 1992, The Drum Shop was the oldest such business in the U.S., having been founded by George Hamilton, Sr. in 1946.

Endorser News

Chester Thompson endorsing Mackie mixers.

Joey Kramer playing DW drums.

Renowned educators **Steve Houghton, Thom Hannum, and Tom Brechtlein** are using Calato/Regal Tip sticks.

Zakir Hussain, Steve Reid, Frank Colon, Cafe, and Uno Mondo are new (Overkill) playing Stingray drums.

David Kovins is using Mike Balter

mallets.

Jim Keltner, Ndugu Chancier, Paul Wertico, Ed Thigpen, Ian Wallace, Tom Brechtlein, Michael White, and Tony Williams are using Shure mic's.

Mike Terrana (Yngwie Malmsteen), **Mitch McLee** (Southgang), **Larry Bright, Kerry Brown, Steve DeBoard** (Slammin' Gladys), **Brad Kemp** (Machines Of Loving Grace), **Ralph Peterson, Tony Piro** (Travis Tritt), **Herlin Riley, and Mark Shulman** playing Mapex drums.

Andy James playing Sabian cymbals and Tama drums.

Nat Barouch (Higher Ground), **Ritchie DeCarlo** (LeCompt), **Kevin Miller** (Shotgun Wedding), **Gary Ponder** (Red Square Black), **Tony Lavender** (Dion), and Tim Mallare



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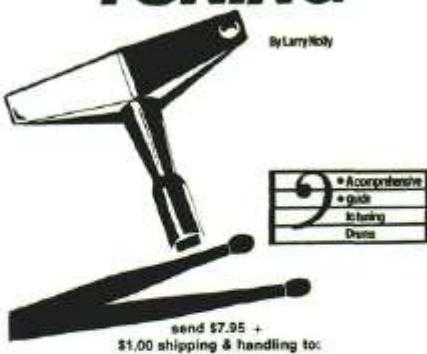
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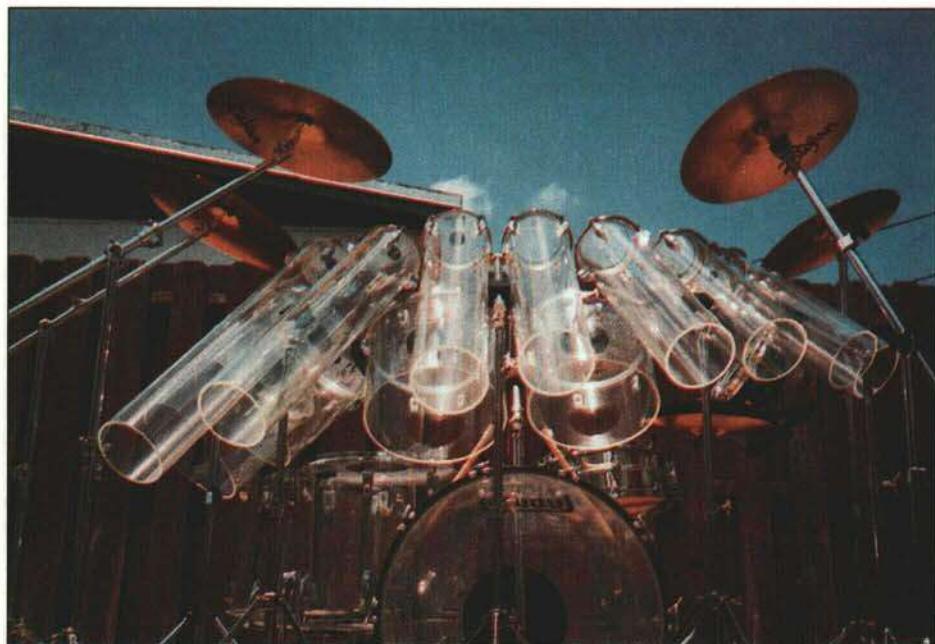
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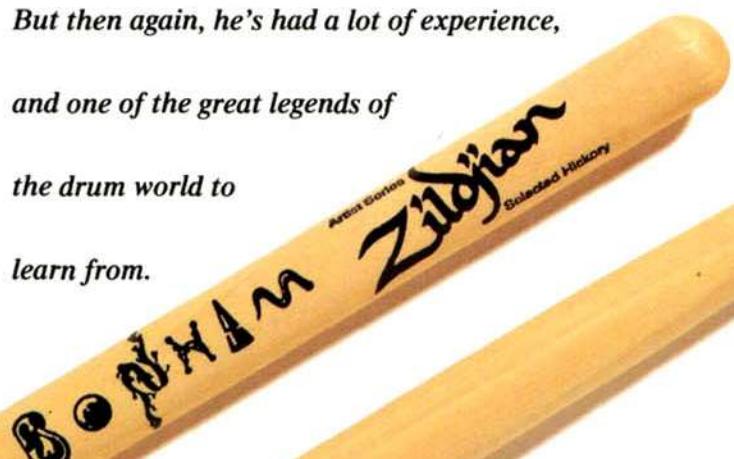
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